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FINANCIAL TIMES

Monday June 1 1992

DB523A

East Jerusalem anniversary leads to party discord

Israel's celebrations of the 25th anniversary of its capture of Arab east Jerusalem turned into a discordant chorus of competing political claims. Leaders of the ruling Likud party and the opposition Labour party sought to turn the occasion to advantage in the campaign for the general election on June 23. Both parties reiterated the popular pledge that Jerusalem would never be the capital of a Palestinian state. Page 5; Hardening eyes in Gaza, Page 5

Hopes for fighter contracts: Supporters of the \$36bn European Fighter Aircraft project within the German government have won a one-month delay in the final decision on whether to pull out of the deal. Page 14

Canary Wharf: The UK government held talks with three developers, including Olympia and York, on terms for a shift of government officials to the Docklands area of east London even before Q&Y's Canary Wharf office development went into administration last week. Page 14; Bank could lose £300m on Q&Y. Page 15

Austerity pleas: Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, governor of the Bank of Italy, called for the urgent introduction of an austerity package to tackle the country's fast deteriorating public finances. Page 2

Ferruzzi Finanziaria: Italian holding company for Italy's second biggest private-sector industrial group, suffered a sharp drop in net attributable profits, to L115bn (\$33.8m) for 1991, against L248bn the previous year. Page 17

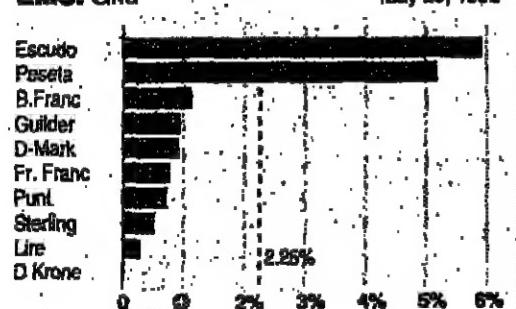
War protests: Police arrested nine protesters at the dedication ceremony in London of a statue of Sir Arthur Harris, the RAF chief responsible for the blanket bombing campaign over German cities in the second world war. Page 14

ANC threat: The African National Congress made a commitment at its policy conference to mass action on an unprecedented scale in South Africa. Page 4

Profits fall: Japan's five largest steelmakers reported lower pre-tax profits for fiscal 1991 because of weak demand and higher production costs. They expect a further decline in earnings this year. Page 17

European Monetary System: The escudo remained entrenched at the top of the EMS grid at 5.9 per cent above the Danish krone, still the weakest currency. Last week the D-Mark weakened against the escudo despite repeated sales of escudos by the Bank of Portugal in an attempt to break the Portuguese currency's recent strength. Currencies, Page 25; Lex, Page 14; Economics Notebook, Page 15.

EMS: Grid May 29, 1992



The chart shows the member currencies of the exchange rate mechanism measured against the weakest currency in the EMS's narrow 2.25 per cent fluctuation band. Currencies in the EMS narrow band cannot rise more than 2.25 per cent from the weakest currency in that part of the system. Sterling, the Spanish peseta and the Portuguese escudo operate with 6 per cent fluctuation bands.

'Yes' vote likely: Denmark looks set to back the Maastricht treaty on European union by a comfortable majority when it votes tomorrow in a referendum on the subject. Page 2

Smith Corona: US manufacturer of typewriters and word processors, is pulling out of the personal computer market little more than a year after it entered the sector through a venture with Acer, the large Taiwanese company. Page 15

D-Mark moves: Estonia plans to phase out the rouble and join the D-Mark zone when the Baltic state later this month becomes the first part of the former Soviet empire to introduce its own currency. Page 2

Shamour squashed: President George Bush denied rumours that he is considering turning to James Baker, secretary of state, to bring direction to his re-election campaign. Page 4

Nissan UK: A former executive of the private motor distributor is claiming damages of £1.3m (£2.3m) for alleged breach of contract and wrongful dismissal three years ago.

Policy switch: Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic party is this week planning to force through the Diet controversial legislation which would allow Japanese troops to serve on United Nations peacekeeping missions abroad. Page 4

Poll deaths: Two people were killed in electoral violence as Nepal completed two-stage local polls which saw significant gains for the ruling Nepali Congress party.

Dowty Group: UK aerospace and information technology group, could this week pull its defence against the hostile £494m (\$899m) bid from TI, the specialist engineering company, with the help of payments on a cancelled UK Ministry of Defence contract. Page 15

Sixth time lucky: World motor racing champion Ayrton Senna of Brazil won the Monaco Grand Prix, ending the five-race winning run of Britain's Nigel Mansell, who finished second.

Austria Sch30 **Hungary** Ft152 **Malta** Lm150 **S. Arabia** SR5.00
Belgium Dfl100 **Iceland** Kr180 **Morocco** MDH11 **Singapore** S\$4.10
Belgium BEF50 **India** Ru100 **Morocco** MDH11 **Singapore** S\$4.10
Denmark DK100 **Indonesia** Rp800 **Nigeria** Nair20 **Sweden** Skr14
Croatia CS100 **Israel** Shd50 **Norway** Nkr111 **Switzerland** SF14
Czech Kcs25 **Italy** L2500 **Oman** ORT120 **Thailand** Baht100
Denmark DK114 **Jordan** JD120 **Pakistan** Ps1000 **Turkey** L5000
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France FFr50 **Kuwait** Ft1000 **Poland** Zl1000 **UAE** Dirh100
Germany DM3.30 **Lebanon** US\$1.25 **Portugal** Es100 **UAE** Dirh100
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Sarajevo ceasefire agreed as tough sanctions start

By Judy Dempsey and Laura Silber in Belgrade

WARRING factions in the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo agreed to a ceasefire yesterday in response to the sweeping sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro by the United Nations on Saturday.

The ceasefire news came after 50,000 demonstrators marched through Belgrade to protest against the war in Bosnia and to show support for those trapped in the besieged Bosnian capital.

Yugoslav federal troops and Serb irregulars had earlier continued to bombard Sarajevo and the Croatian Adriatic resort of Dubrovnik in spite of the sanctions.

Socialist party condemned the sanctions as "an aggression against the legal, economic and political order". Mr Vladislav Jovanovic, the foreign minister told Belgrade Radio: "We will make efforts to make the whole world, especially the Security Council, get the full picture about our attempts to stop the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The sanctions resolution also cuts all air links, freezes Serbia's financial assets overseas, calls for a reduction in the size of its diplomatic missions abroad and bars Yugoslav representatives from sports events and cultural exchanges.

The UK's Department of Trade and Industry said some export licences granted to between 50 and 60 UK companies to supply goods to Serbia and Montenegro were revoked. British trading

links with the Serbian-led remnant of Yugoslavia were severed at 11.30 am yesterday.

The International Football Federation (Fifa) said it was disqualifying Yugoslavia from international competition, including the forthcoming European soccer championship finals in Sweden. Serb leaders from the ruling

take effect at 8 pm (1600 GMT) today.

Mr Mile Akmadzic, secretary-general in Bosnia's collective Moslem-Croat presidency, told a televised news conference the pact had been brokered by Col John Wilson, a UN peace-keeping officer in Sarajevo.

"We will also start urgent negotiations with the federal army and [UN peace-keepers] to reopen Sarajevo airport and an air corridor over Bosnia," Mr Akmadzic added, without elaboration.

The ceasefire could represent the start of a long and difficult process aimed at sending food, medical and humanitarian supplies into the city. Humanitarian agencies have been unable to penetrate a Serb blockade of Sarajevo for weeks.

Mass hunger and sickness are now reported in the city of 500,000 people.

In Dubrovnik, Croatian officials reported a tentative truce agreed during a third successive day of army bombardment. Guns fell silent around Dubrovnik at 5 pm (1500 GMT), a Reuters correspondent in the city reported.

Renewed barrages against Sarajevo and Dubrovnik, despite the UN vote, suggested some Serb militia and Yugoslav army troops were acting beyond political control.

UN and Bosnian officials said Serb and Moslem-Croat forces in Sarajevo accepted a ceasefire to

that fighting continued in Dobrinja, a suburb of Sarajevo, which has been blocked from all

food and water supplies for four weeks. "We welcome the sanctions against Serbia, but they are

too late. We are afraid that the ceasefire will allow the Serb militia to regroup," she said.



No sanctuary: A nun picks through the debris in the Sigurata church in Dubrovnik. The 13th century roof was destroyed during heavy attacks by the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Army

Yeltsin signals turnaround in economic policy

By John Lloyd in Moscow

MR Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, has signalled a sharp change of course in Russian economic policy in the face of rising public discontent.

The turnaround was highlighted this weekend when Mr Yeltsin said he would resist pressure from the International Monetary Fund to raise energy prices to world levels and also fired his energy minister, who supported energy liberalisation.

Mr Yeltsin met Mr Delors on his return to Moscow after a tour of Russian provincial centres where he met fierce criticism about the effects of economic reform.

His remarks to Mr Delors follow serious difficulties in the Russian cabinet with its reform

programme. Last Thursday and Friday, the Russian parliament refused to pass laws on privatisation and bankruptcy. This threatened the planned transfer of state property into private hands – the core of the government's economic strategy.

The Russian president told a weekend conference of managers of the country's oil and gas enterprises that he would resist pressure from the IMF to raise energy prices. Instead, an "expert group" has been established to analyse the effects of energy price rises.

He said that "although the IMF demands immediate introduction of free prices for fuel, we cannot do this at the moment, for we may lose control of the political situation if we do... if we get beyond the critical point, we'll be faced with a general disaster."

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At the same time, Mr Yeltsin dismissed from office Mr Vladimir Lopukhin, the energy minister and replaced him with Mr Viktor Chernomyrdin, a former Soviet minister of the gas industry. Mr Lopukhin had been a sup-

porter of free energy prices. He failed to stop the fall in oil production and in recent weeks has faced a rising threat of strikes in the oil producing regions.

Mr Chernomyrdin's appointment is a further example of a recent appointments to the cabinet of figures from the industry, and appears to show a desire by Mr Yeltsin to water down the force of the economic reforms.

Mr Delors said at the weekend that Mr Yeltsin had complained to him that none of the \$24bn of foreign assistance put up by the

major foreign industrial countries and the IMF had yet been paid. The Russian president told Mr Delors that he would press for a more efficient mechanism of payment at his meeting with G7 leaders in Munich on July 8.

Mr Delors said he cautioned the Russian leaders from "expecting too much from Munich" and said the conference would set stiff conditions for Russia and the other former Soviet states.

Estonia to bring in own currency. Page 2

Wealthy nations balk at cost of bio-diversity treaty

By David Lascelles in Rio and Jurek Martin in Washington

MANY of the world's wealthier nations have expressed doubts about one of the two main documents to be signed at the Earth Summit, just two days before the gathering is due to begin.

President George Bush's announcement on Friday night that the US would not sign the biological diversity treaty – an international treaty to preserve species – has been followed by objections from other states.

The outburst of disagreement has cast a shadow over the final preparations for an event whose aims have already been cut back by compromise.

Although the US does not think it can stop the signing of the biological diversity treaty in Rio de Janeiro, it apparently hopes that a number of other nations, including Japan and some members of the European Community, will now be persuaded to take a second look at it.

Mr David Maclean, the UK environment minister said yesterday the UK was worried about the financial aspects of the treaty and had asked its lawyers to study the text.

The strength of concern has prompted 19 industrialised countries to sign a declaration which lays out their reading of a potentially ambiguous clause in the

treaty, which they fear could amount to their signing a blank cheque.

The draft of the treaty mainly negotiated last month says the amount of money rich nations will give to poorer ones to help them preserve their species would be determined by all participating countries.

This means that the donor nations could be out-voted by the recipients, and forced to hand over large sums of money.

Green shoots of good intention..... Page 4

This is particularly sensitive given that the richer countries are resisting the notion that the Earth Summit is mainly about environmental aid for the Third World.

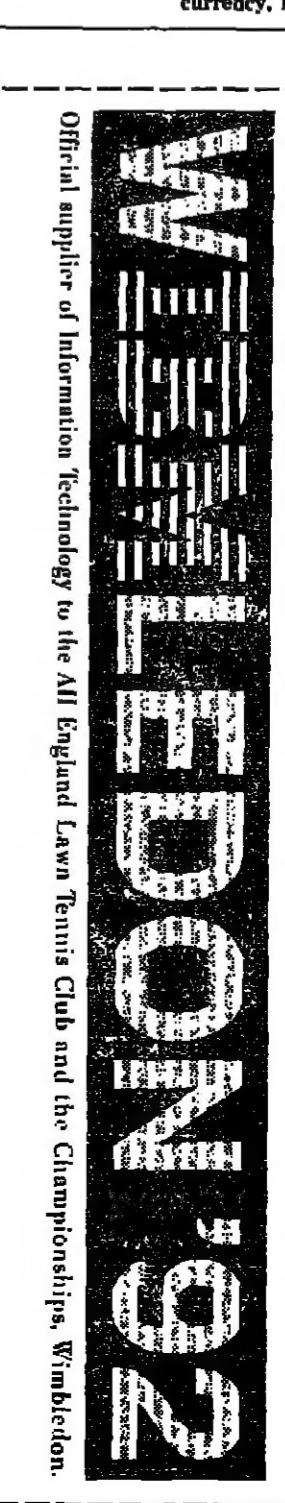
But there are wider worries. The treaty defines the right of countries to exploit their species for commercial purposes, for example by making medicines out of tropical plants. Industrial countries are concerned that this would undermine pharmaceutical patent rights.

The treaty on bio-diversity is aimed at preserving the planet's range of plant and animal life. It lays out the rights, as well as the duties, of countries to protect biological resources.

It has proved especially difficult to negotiate because it has

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NEWS: UN SANCTIONS AGAINST SERBIA

Serbian president's appeal to the international community has come too late Milosevic in fight to save his political life

SERBIAN president Slobodan Milosevic has been cornered by the international community, led by the US.

The United Nations' sanctions imposed on Saturday night against Serbia and its ally Montenegro mean that Serbia is now being held responsible for the fighting, destruction, mutilation and killings which have swept Bosnia-Hercegovina and Croatia over the past year.

In the first real sign of desperation, Mr Milosevic appealed at the weekend to US President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin to stop the fighting in Bosnia-Hercegovina. Although he said he would co-operate in their efforts, he attacked sanctions, which unfairly singled out Serbia, he said.

For the first time since he came to power in 1987, Mr Milosevic is battling for his political life. The question now is whether he can survive. Not only does he face, for the first time, the ire of the international community, but Serbs, who for five years have staunchly defended his expansionist policies, are not expected to come to his defence.

Serbia's many warlords – including Mr Vojislav Seselj, head of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party, Mr Zeljko Raznatovic, known as Arkan and head of a ruthless Serb paramilitary unit, and Mr Radovan Karadzic, nationalist head of Bosnia's Serbs – are accusing Mr Milosevic of being "too soft" and "too moderate".

Serb militia forces, who already control large swathes of Bosnian territory, would regard any appeal by Mr Milosevic as

Serbian militia forces would see any appeal by Mr Milosevic to end the fighting as a betrayal of the Serbian cause, Judy Dempsey writes

evic to end the fighting as treasonable, a betrayal of the Serbian cause. "We will fight for Serbia. We will not give up the struggle," a defiant Arkan said in Belgrade.

On the other side, the anti-war demonstration in Belgrade yesterday may have come too late to avert the deaths of at least 10,000 people, and the displacement of more than 15m.

Those who marched represented thousands of the liberal, powerless middle-class which has been jolted at last out of its

passive attitude to Mr Milosevic by the horror of the war in Sarajevo.

The demonstration was con-

tinued by the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party, Mr Zeljko Raznatovic, known as Arkan and head of a ruthless Serb paramilitary unit, and Mr Radovan Karadzic, nationalist head of Bosnia's Serbs – are accusing Mr Milosevic of being "too soft" and "too moderate".

Serb militia forces, who already control large swathes of Bosnian territory, would regard any appeal by Mr Milosevic as

groups which have not only been radicalised by the war, but are more fervent than Mr Milosevic.

Against this background, his conciliatory appeal for co-operation from the international community at the weekend has come too late. This is because he has consistently failed to identify Serbia and the Yugoslav army as the aggressor in the war in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. Yet, when it suited him, particularly under international pressure, Mr Milosevic reigned in some radical Serbs, such as Mr Milan Babic, head of the self-proclaimed Serbian republic of Croatia.

Because of Mr Milosevic's unpredictable nature, a senior western diplomat warned: "You cannot yet write off Milosevic – nor can you be sure that sanctions will put an end to the fighting in Bosnia".

The war in Bosnia-Hercegovina is also likely to continue because the fighting there has traumatised and radicalised the Croat, Serb and Moslem communities, all of which are seeking revenge.

In Hercegovina, where there is a heavy concentration of Croats, ultra-nationalist Cro-

Hundreds left stranded at Belgrade airport

By Charles Batchelor

sanctions, saying Serbia would receive oil and energy supplies from Angola.

But the UN total embargo on all commodities and products means no country will be allowed to sell or supply oil to Serbia; western analysts in Belgrade believe the oil embargo is the most powerful weapon in the UN's armoury of sanctions.

A report by Petroleum Intelligence Weekly late last year said Yugoslav oil output was 75,000 barrels a day, representing only 25 per cent of demand. Gas production was about 3bn cubic metres a year, or about 40 per cent of demand. Western diplomats believe a run-down of oil reserves, the extent of which are unknown, would affect the Serbian-backed Yugoslav army and the entire industrial sector.

Industrial production in various sectors fell in the first

quarter of this year by 25-40 per cent against the same period last year. Exports of Yugoslavs, Serbia's car maker, are almost at a halt because of the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina and the virtual collapse of trade relations. All three of the former Yugoslav republics provided car components, upholstery, white goods and electronics to Serbia.

Diplomats and economists say sanctions may take some time to bite but that the Serbian leadership will have to continue to print money to pay the workforce. This is likely to fuel inflation, now running at about 100 per cent a month.

Economists say that, with prices almost doubling daily, the inflation rate is out of control. Lines of cars queued at many Belgrade petrol stations yesterday, and people were stock-piling foods.

World severs trading links

By Charles Batchelor

HUNDREDS of travellers were stranded at Belgrade airport yesterday, and thousands more delayed abroad, as UN sanctions on air travel took effect. Reuter reports from Belgrade.

By midday, 18 flights from Belgrade had been cancelled. Only one aircraft had left – to Moscow. The airport was packed with people screaming babies and armed police.

The UN barred all aircraft from leaving Yugoslavia, except in special circumstances.

Tanjug news agency said Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands had already enforced the ban.

An official in Belgrade said some aircraft might take off, but could be turned back in mid-flight.



MAN UNDER PRESSURE: Serbia's president Slobodan Milosevic in the streets of Belgrade yesterday

Sports ban 'will make the average guy think'

ONE immediate serious psychological blow to Serbia of UN sanctions was the international sports ban. Our Foreign Staff reports from Belgrade and London. "Banning the Yugoslav football and basketball teams makes the average guy think," said a sports official in Belgrade, as he awaited last night's confirmation of the suspension by the international football association (Fifa). "It is a crushing blow to the man in the street."

The ban prohibits the Yugoslav team, reckoned among the world's best, taking part in the European championships finals starting in Sweden on June 10. The team will be replaced by Denmark. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) meets next week to discuss whether to exclude Yugoslavia from this summer's Barcelona Games.

Meanwhile, while the International Tennis Federation yesterday banned Yugoslavia from the Davis Cup and similar competitions, Miss Monica Seles of Yugoslavia yesterday continued to defend her French Open tennis title and seemed in no danger of removal from the tournament.

"The French Open is composed of individuals and they in no way represent their country," tennis officials said. "We must make a difference between national teams and individual players." Miss Seles, born in Novi Sad, Serbia, has lived in the US for about six years.

The Yugoslav Olympic Committee last night pleaded to remain in the Barcelona games, which begin on July 25. Mr Aleksandar Sekocovic, head of the committee, said: "We expect the IOC to respect Olympic principles and not mix politics with sport."

"We are continuing to train normally for the Olympics," said Mr Rajko Toroman, Yugoslav basketball team coach. Mr Juan Antonio Samaranch, IOC president, said his executive commission would meet in Lissabon to analyse the UN resolution. Absence of the Yugoslavs "would be a blow"; they were "a strong team".

WHY THE SHIFT IN MOUNTAIN BIKES IS TO TAIWAN.

Did you know that mountain bikes from Taiwan are among the world's finest in both design and performance?

If you didn't, it's time to shift your thinking.

Mountain bikes aren't just made in Taiwan, they're very well made in Taiwan.

For example, Taiwan engineers helped develop state-of-the-art carbon fiber bike frames. They're twice as strong and 20% lighter than comparable alloy steel frames. And mountain bikes made in Taiwan continue to be among the top finishers in world championships.

The bike shown here is just one example of the outstanding engineering and craftsmanship coming from Taiwan today. Taiwan's designers and manufacturers are dedicated to creating a wide range of high quality products to help you reach your goals.

Whether it's getting to the top of a mountain. Or the top of your profession.

IT'S VERY WELL MADE IN
TAIWAN

NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Deterioration in relations stems directly from stalemate at Codesa

ANC focuses ire on S African president

By Philip Gash in Johannesburg

THE African National Congress's commitment to mass action on an unprecedented scale in South Africa, made at its policy conference which ended yesterday, has come at a time when relations between the government and the organisation have plunged to a low point.

The deterioration in relations flows directly from the failure two weeks ago to make substantial progress at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), where a second round of constitutional talks took place. Since the stalemate the ANC has stepped up its attacks on the government.

Mr Nelson Mandela, ANC leader,

launched yesterday a stinging attack on President F.W. de Klerk. Mr Mandela again likened South Africa to Nazi Germany, saying that in South Africa people were killed merely because they were black, and talked about crimes that had been committed by the president. Government ministers have given notice that they will respond in kind.

A return to mass action and confrontation with the state would reflect an attempt by the ANC to supplement its influence at the negotiation table with popular support on the street. An ANC statement said: "We have come to the realisation that unless the majority of South Africans participate actively in shaping the process, negotiations must fail."

Although the organisation stresses

that it remains committed to negotiations, the return to "struggle" politics is clearly a victory for militants in the movement. This is typified by the return to prominence of Mr Ronnie Kasrils, a marginal figure in the negotiation process, to head the ANC's campaign committee.

The chill in the political climate shifted attention from the ANC's four-day policy conference, where there was a mood of realism. This was most prominent in the economic field, with the ANC moving some distance from its initial socialist-style pronouncements.

Although the stress is on policies which will help uplift the country's poorest people, there is no dogmatism

about the best way to achieve this. Policy adopted by the ANC notes that the priority is "not the legal form that state involvement in economic activity might take at any point, but whether such action will strengthen the ability of the economy to respond to the massive inequalities in the country".

The ANC says it will encourage foreign investors, adding: "The most important way to promote foreign investment is to establish a climate of political stability, economic growth and transparent, consistent economic policies."

Mr de Klerk left yesterday on a week-long visit to Russia, Japan and Singapore, where he will attempt to improve trade and investment links.

Bush denies rift in White House

By Jurek Martin in Washington

PRESIDENT George Bush has denied rumours that he is considering turning to Mr James Baker, secretary of state, to bring order to the White House and direction to his re-election campaign.

While campaigning in California, he denied a report that Mr Robert Mosbacher, his campaign chairman, had urged him last week to fire Mr Samuel Skinner, the White House chief of staff, and replace him with Mr Baker.

A State Department spokeswoman also said there had been no discussions between Mr Bush and Mr Baker, who are old friends, about a job change. Mr Baker ran Mr Bush's unsuccessful campaign for the Republican nomination in 1980 and in his position as White House chief of staff was a key figure in the Reagan re-election campaign of 1984.

Mr Mosbacher was more equivocal. Mr Baker, he told the Washington Post newspaper,

per, "can be part of the solution to any problem". But he refused to say whether he had urged the president to move him back to his old job.

Criticism in Washington of Mr Skinner's record has been growing since the former secretary of transport was brought in to replace Mr John Sununu in the White House late last year.

The president's lacklustre and frequently unfocused performance in recent months has been ascribed to the lack of political direction he has been receiving from his chief of staff.

On the political front, there have been complaints about lack of co-operation between the White House and local Republican election efforts. The White House has also seemed slow to react to the growing threat of the independent candidacy of Mr Ross Perot, concentrating instead on traditional attacks on the pro-life tendencies of the Democratic party.

There has been uncertainty

over how best to respond to the Los Angeles riots and, most recently, confusion over the degree of support Mr Bush should lend Vice-President Dan Quayle in his assault on the effects popular television has on traditional family values.

According to the polls, the president is also not getting much credit for recovery in the economy.

Although Mr Mosbacher may have reflected these concerns, the former commerce secretary is not an influential campaign

chairman. His reputation was damaged by his role as architect of the president's trip to Japan in January, a disastrous excursion which is now seen as the beginning of the steady decline in Mr Bush's popularity.

overseas, even on UN

missions.

With the Gulf crisis raging, public doubts about the risks of sending Japanese servicemen into a war zone forced the government to abandon its original plans. But once fighting ended, support grew for Japan to increase its physical and monetary contribution to international affairs.

The dispatch of a squadron of minesweepers to the Gulf last summer prompted little criticism, either domestically or from the governments of China and other Asian countries which had been quick to condemn Japan in the past for anything smacking of military action.

Drafting legislation involved

tortuous inter-party discussions as the LDP controls the lower house in the Diet but lacks a majority in the upper house. LDP leaders also wanted to win support from as many parties as possible - so that all could share the blame if the sensitive legislation turned into a political millstone.

Last December the centrist Komei and Democratic Socialist parties agreed to come on board. With their support the LDP forced legislation through the lower house amid angry scenes.

The LDP's energies were then absorbed for some time in annual budgetary talks and various financial scandals. Even though Mr Kiichi Miyazawa, prime minister, pledged to support the bills he seemed

too weak to secure the necessary agreements. Some party leaders wanted action to be postponed - at least until after elections to the Diet's upper house, to be held in July.

But a recent surge in pro-LDP sentiment in opinion polls appears to have emboldened the party. The final draft of the legislation also contains many concessions to the cautious. Not more than 2,000 Japanese troops will serve in any peace-keeping force; they will be limited to support roles, such as transport, and will not be permitted to serve in frontline units; and they will be allowed to use arms only in self-defence. Furthermore, each time the government decides to join a peace-keeping operation it must seek Diet approval.

going overseas, even on UN

missions.

most of the chief executives present run the world's most polluting industries, such as car and chemical manufacturing. Changes decided at the UN summit will cost them, but they are not here to lobby against it. Rather, they are vocal in calling for regulations.

Leading the green business offensive is Mr Stephan Schmidheiny, a Swiss billionaire from the asbestos trade and now principal adviser on business and industry to Mr Maurice Strong, conference secretary-general.

Mr Schmidheiny insists that industry is changing: "Profit and ecology are linked. We're convinced that, unless we change course, we'll ruin our future. Soon it will be impossible to separate business excellence and environmental concern."

However, Mr Richard Lapier, industry adviser for the World Wide Fund for Nature, wonders: "I don't know if any of them realise how sweeping the changes must be. Industry is driven on a set of rules which tends to work against the environment because it does not internalise environmental costs. Sustainable

The outcome of 18 months of meetings is a report calling for new partnerships of government and the private sector, and proposing payment for the use of natural resources, technological co-operation between the global north and south, and tougher rules on pollution so that the polluter pays.

While the US government remains hostile to environmental regulation, some of the leading US business executives are in Rio calling for it.

Mr Frank Popoff, head of Dow Chemical, says: "It's very much in our interest to get reg-

ulation which will enhance business moves to sustainable development."

Sustainable development - that's the mantra of the new green industrialists. Mr Jan-Olof Willems, executive director of the International Chamber of Commerce Office on Environment, defines it thus: "Environmental is an asset. Sustainable development is about learning to develop and maintain this asset so we live off the income, not the capital."

The message is that what is good for the environment need not be bad for the economy. There can even be benefits.

Mr Joseph Connor, head of the ICC, says: "The corporate challenge is to take advantage of green consumerism and opportunities such as waste recycling and non-polluting products."

The market for environmental products in Europe to the end of this decade has been estimated at \$200 billion.

But for industry to change profoundly, Mr Schmidheiny repeats, it needs government incentives and penalties as carrots and sticks.

"The nations most successful in wielding these will be those whose industries prosper, he says."

Captains of industry from all over the world have addressed packed meetings in Rio last week. Such phrases as "environmental responsibility" have tripped off tongues.

Yet many of the chief executives present run the world's most polluting industries, such as car and chemical manufacturing. Changes decided at the UN summit will cost them, but they are not here to lobby against it. Rather, they are vocal in calling for regulations.

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NEWS: INTERNATIONAL



Israeli Air Force men, dancing in line behind a rabbi on the plaza before the western wall in Jerusalem, yesterday celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Israeli reunification of the city.

East Jerusalem anniversary leads to party discord

By Hugh Carnegy
in Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S celebrations of the 25th anniversary of its capture of Arab east Jerusalem turned into a discordant chorus of competing political claims yesterday, as leaders of the ruling Likud party and opposition Labour sought to turn the occasion to advantage in the campaign for the general election on June 23.

Both Labour and Likud reiterated the popular pledge first made when Israeli forces took east Jerusalem from Jordan on June 7, 1967. "Our capital is one Jerusalem, forever," said Mr Yitzhak Shamir, prime minister. "Never will it be a capital for a foreign power," he added, referring to the Arab claim that the city be the capital of a Palestinian state.

But the two parties were at loggerheads over the celebrations. Mr Ariel Sharon, housing minister, pledged on a visit to a new Jewish settlement in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City to settle Jews in every Arab district, most of which are virtual no-go areas for Israelis. The settlement policy has been condemned as dangerously provocative by Labour and Mr Teddy Kollek, mayor of Jerusalem.

Some 150,000 Arabs still live in the city, making up more than 25 per cent of the population. Israel had barred Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip from entering Jerusalem during the celebrations, which coincided with the anniversary in the Hebrew calendar.

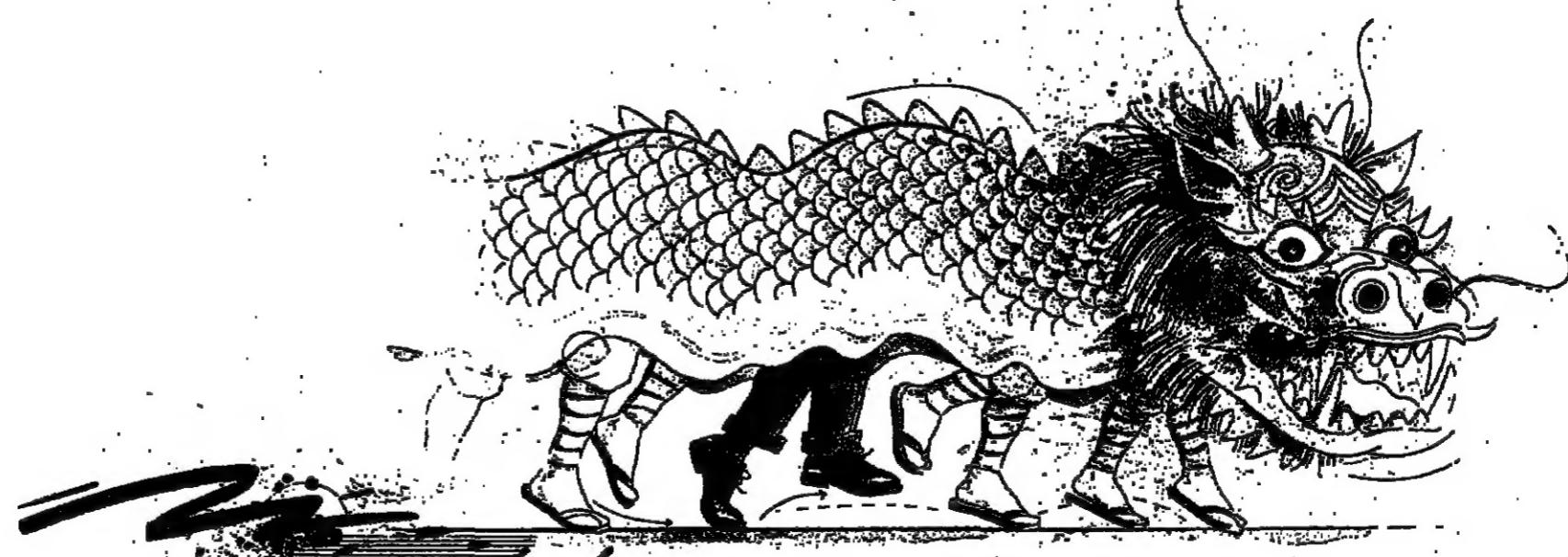
Mr Yitzhak Rabin, the Labour leader and army chief of staff during the Six-Day War of 1967, was kept off the list of speakers at a ceremony attended by all parties for signing a "Jerusalem covenant" to reiterate Israel's claim to sovereignty over the city.

Mr Kollek refused to speak and signed the document under protest, objecting to its right-wing ideological tone.

Labour hit back, even so, organising rallies at which Mr Rabin and other former senior generals stressed that it was under their command that Israel had achieved its greatest military triumph.

As though to blunt the message, Mr Shamir's government ordered a renewed wave of air strikes on Hezbollah Moslem fundamentalist militia targets in Lebanon yesterday, as a 10-day-old onslaught there by Israeli forces continued. One raid was inside territory controlled by Syrian forces.

In East Asia even modern trading is based on tradition.



Over the last 168 years we have become part of that tradition.

The traders who do business there know that today's East Asia is more than just a thriving, dynamic economic region. They realise that it is made up of very different cultures, each with its own specific customs and traditions. That's why they appreciate a bank with a long tradition in the region, a bank with a profound awareness of, and roots in, these different local cultures.

A bank like ABN AMRO Bank which can trace its presence in Japan, for example, as far back as 1858, and which has been in East Asia no less than 150 years.

In the 168 years of our history we have built up a network of 1850 branches in 53 countries. We have recently opened yet more new branches in Thailand, Indonesia, China and Korea. Further

validation of our reputation in the region as an active bank which perseveres in its aim for steady growth.

With US\$ 242.7 billion in assets and US\$ 9 billion in shareholders' equity, ABN AMRO Bank ranks among the world's top twenty banks. But equally important to East Asian traders is the fact that we're a bank which invests a great deal of time and effort in understanding the local environment and building up excellent local contacts.

CREATING THE STANDARD IN BANKING.



ABN·AMRO Bank

Hardening eyes in Gaza

Hugh Carnegy finds conditions worsening in the occupied territories

D R MAHMOUD ZAHAR, a prominent supporter of the Islamic fundamentalist movement in the Gaza Strip, shed few tears last week over the fate of a 15-year-old Israeli schoolgirl stabbed to death in Tel Aviv suburb a few days before by a young unemployed Palestinian.

In fact, he was indignant. Why was the world so concerned about the killing of one Israeli girl when, for years, countless Palestinian children had been killed by Israeli occupying their land, he asked. "We do not advocate killing children, but this is a war."

As Israelis celebrate the 25th anniversary of their victory in the Six-Day War of June 1967, there is ample evidence of the Iron fist which the Israeli army deploys to keep order in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem - and of the bitter resistance to it.

In the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza, the sandy alleys between the squall dwellings are scorched black by burning roadblocks thrown up almost daily by rioting youths. A watchtower reminiscent of a prison camp and surrounded by high fencing was erected recently to help the troops keep a lid on the unrest.

"The level of frustration on the ground has substantially increased," said a foreign aid worker with several years of experience in Gaza. "The economic situation has got worse and worse. This is all contributing to a growing sense of helplessness and frustration."

The uprising against Israeli rule which erupted in 1987, faded to three other deadly trends have developed.

First, the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas, a newly powerful force in the strip, adopted the use of arms against the occupation. Like the Palestine Liberation Organisation which it rivals, Hamas has eschewed the use of guns, chiefly for fear of provoking an even tougher response from the Israelis and losing the support of international public opinion.

Now its fighters frequently ambush troops and it backs attacks on individual Israelis. "Did public opinion liberate our land? Did public opinion restore our rights?" asks Dr Zahar rhetorically.

Second, the army stepped up its use of undercover squads, which have shot dead some 40 Palestinians in the past year.

Third, there was intensification of a trend of brutal killings by Palestinians of compatriots accused of collaboration with Israel.

For the PLO, this has been a testing time. The Madrid peace conference of last October, where Palestinians put their case with unprecedented force,

won considerable support in Gaza, home of Dr Haider Abdel Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation.

Since then, though, the slow pace of the negotiations has put pressure on the PLO to show results or lose further support to Hamas, which rejects the peace process.

Mr Awad Mahbouh, a political activist and resident of Jabalya, says most Gazans realised the PLO had little choice but to join the peace talks and they supported them. But they also applaud the gunmen of Hamas for keeping pressure on Israel.

He still believes that a Palestinian state will be created. A key question in Gaza, where the vast majority of refugees came in 1948 from within what is now Israel, is whether that state should be limited to the West Bank and Gaza, as the PLO concedes, or include all the territory between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, as Hamas says.

Mr Mahbouh says his aged father, still holding the key to his house (long since destroyed) near the Israeli city of Ashkelon, would never give up the claim to return. But the son is more pragmatic: "If the PLO says we should settle for compensation, we will accept it instead of going back."

NEWS: UK

Trade groups expected to agree merger

By Charles Batchelor

BRITAIN'S chambers of commerce and chambers of trade are on the verge of burying their long rivalry and hope to reach agreement on a merger by the autumn.

A link-up between the Association of British Chambers of Commerce (ABCC), with 83,000 member companies, and the National Chamber of Trade (NCT), with 160,000 members, mainly in retailing, would create a business organisation second in size only to the Confederation of British Industry with 250,000 members.

A merger would also bolster the ABCC's programme to reorganise and strengthen the chamber of commerce network to make it more of a match for the large officially recognised chambers on the Continent. The ABCC has launched a recruitment drive to bring membership to 150,000 by 1994 as part of the programme.

"A merger will complicate our development strategy but it will add new fabric and build membership," said Ms Janet Postlar, spokeswoman for the ABCC. The chambers of commerce that have made many attempts in recent years to merge but they failed over disagreements about their respective voting strengths.

Nissan UK faces fresh round of legal action

By Kevin Done, Motor Industry Correspondent

A FORMER executive of Nissan UK (NUK), the private motor distributor, is claiming damages of £1.5m for alleged breach of contract and wrongful dismissal three years ago.

The action against NUK in further legal conflict in addition to its current investigation by the Inland Revenue - the UK tax authorities - for alleged corporation tax fraud, and its own multi-million pound damage claim against Nissan Motor, the Japanese car maker, in Tokyo.

The hearing of the alleged wrongful dismissal of Mr Stan Cholaj, former assistant managing director of NUK, is scheduled to begin tomorrow at the High Court in London. It will examine the management style of Mr Octav Botnar, the 72-year-old Nissan UK chairman and managing director.

It is unclear, however, whether Mr Botnar will give evidence, as he has remained overseas since the end of January, when a warrant for his arrest was issued by the Inland Revenue.

Nissan UK's problems mounted last year when the Inland Revenue mounted a dramatic dawn raid on 13 separate locations including company offices and the homes of a number of executives.

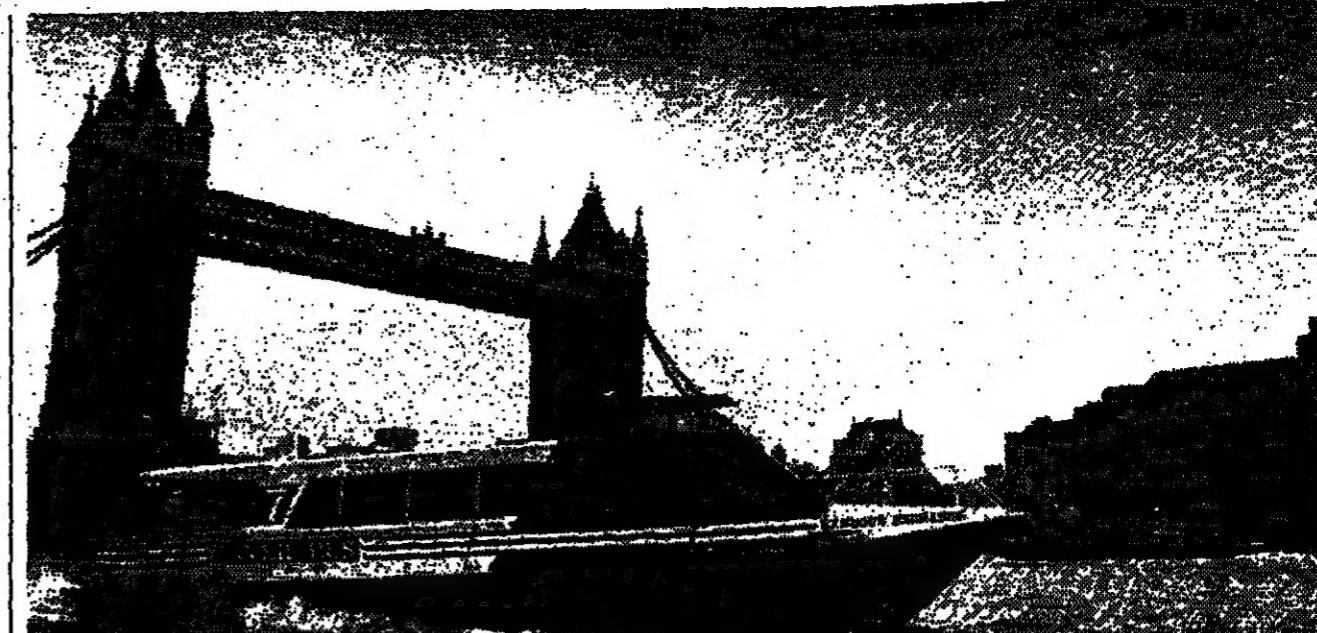
Mr Cholaj, meanwhile, is claiming that Mr Botnar's behaviour undermined his position as an assistant managing director of NUK. He is now managing director of the importer/distributor company for SEAT cars in the UK.

He alleges that Mr Botnar belittled him in front of junior employees, instructed some employees not to deal with him, refused to allow him to attend some meetings within his area of responsibility, and took away many of his responsibilities in April/May, 1989 without prior consultation.

Mr Cholaj claims that his £125,000-a-year contract with NUK had a 10-year notice period. He is also claiming compensation for loss of annual bonus, loss of the use of two company cars and loss of a 3 per cent interest rate subsidy on his £20,000 mortgage.

Nissan UK denies that there was any breach of contract. It claims that under the terms of NUK's articles of association

Mr Botnar as managing director exercised the powers of the board of directors. It claims that with these powers Mr Botnar was empowered to re-arrange the duties of his assistants.



No more sinking feeling: the O&Y administrators have issued a reprieve to the Riverbus commuter service

Riverbus survives to sail another day

By John Authers

LONDON Riverbus, the Thames commuter line, won a reprieve yesterday when Ernst & Young, the administrators of Canary Wharf, said it could continue services even though it depends on Olympia & York (O&Y) as its main backer.

The reprieve was welcomed yesterday by P&O, the shipping company and developer of Chelsea Harbour, which owns

the service in partnership with O&Y.

P&O manages Riverbus via seconded managers, but has no liabilities, and owns less than 6 per cent of the issued share capital.

A P&O spokesman said: "We are quite happy to leave our managers in there to keep it running. That seems the most sensible thing to do because it's the only form of commuter

transport on the river at the moment."

Riverbus seats, however, are in demand yesterday as sightseers visited the riverside Canary Wharf complex in east London.

"The first boat was full and we had to turn people away in the end because it was so busy. We've been doing extremely well," said one Riverbus employee.

Britain in brief



Scientists plan strike ballot on pay levels

More than 200 British nuclear scientists will this week vote on strike action over pay because their colleagues from other countries working on the same European Community project get paid twice as much.

A 10-year campaign for pay parity for the Britons who work on the Joint European Torus at Abingdon, Oxon, has failed despite a European Parliament request for an end to the discrimination.

The British scientists are employed by the UK Atomic Energy Authority and receive between £15,000 and £25,000. Scientists doing the same work from other countries doing the same work are employed by the European Commission receive between £20,000 and £30,000, according to the IPMS civil service union.

Tough talks likely on Ulster

Sir Patrick Mayhew, Northern Ireland secretary, faces a tough meeting today with the province's political leaders that could decide the future of the government's latest attempt to resolve political differences by dialogue.

If a dispute between unionist and nationalist leaders over procedure cannot be resolved, Sir Patrick will soon face the choice between imposing his own decision - or shelving the five-week old initiative.

Sir Patrick may decide to force the pace - by deciding unilaterally on a date for strand two, for instance - or to suspend the initiative in the hope that it could be revived later.

Shake-up urged in textiles

The textile industry in southern Scotland needs radical restructuring and an infusion of new capital and ideas if it is to survive.

These are the recommendations of a report by US consultants to spinning, weaving and knitwear, the main industry in the region, which employs 5,500 workers. It was commissioned last year by Scottish Borders Enterprise, the local enterprise company, after the loss of more than 1,000 jobs and numerous mill closures in the past two years.

The consultants, Werner International, say smaller border textile groups should seek Japanese, EC and US textile companies to buy them or set up joint ventures with them.

Airline launches Stockholm link

Cityair Scandinavia, the Swedish carrier, is launching services today from London to Stockholm in what is claimed to be Europe's first city centre to city centre jet link. Flights

from London City Airport to central Stockholm are due to begin following the decision by the Swedish authorities to reopen Bromma airport, which was closed 10 years ago because of the problem of aircraft noise.

Aviation officials in Stockholm approved the route because the airline is using BAe 146 jets, which are quieter than most other passenger aircraft.

Mr Malcolm Ginsberg, a spokesman for London City Airport, said: "We believe this is the first city centre to city centre route in Europe."

Report points to cheap petrol

Motorists might not believe it, but the price of petrol last year in real terms and net of taxes was the cheapest since 1969, and the second cheapest ever, according to a new report on the motor fuel market.

The report by Sunningdale Publications says tax-free petrol prices in real terms were less than a third of what it was in 1913, the first year of records, although the tax element has tripled in the same period. The net price has been similar in ten other years, but only in 1969 was it marginally lower.

In terms of consumer price, while competition and varying exchange rates mean the situation can change rapidly, the report finds that in February this year the UK had the second-lowest petrol prices in Europe, after Switzerland.

Upturn 'likely' in housing

The potential for recovery in the housing market is more firmly based than for any time in the past three years, a report by Cambridge Econometrics says today.

Prospective purchasers' ability to afford to buy homes had returned to levels which existed before the 1988-89 boom, and would continue to improve. Mortgage repayments, which accounted for 44 per cent of average earnings in the first quarter of 1990, fell to 28 per cent by the end of last year.

Workers face pay freeze

Thousands of shopworkers face pay freezes in 13 retail companies this year, while other retailers are offering rises above the rate of inflation, according to IDS, the independent pay analysis body. Non-food companies such as Allied Maples, Foster Menswear and Asda which will not increase pay this year. Others, including Habitat, House of Fraser and Robert Dyas will review their freezes in six months.

Closure threat at coal mines

Two coal mines in the north east of England may close shortly, if reviews taking place today and next week go against them. That will leave only 3 working pits in the region.

Easington, in Durham, today faces a review that will decide its future, and nearby Vane Tempest, near Newcastle, will be reviewed shortly afterwards.

ENTER THE 1992 NATIONAL TRAINING AWARDS NOW!

If you have been striving to achieve better results through training and can show the fruits of your labours it is time to reap the harvest.

The National Training Awards are presented to companies or individuals who have recognised the long-term benefits of training and can show the results of their commitment to it.

Results such as increased profits, new customers, higher standards, greater effectiveness or a better personal achievement.

By winning an Award you will gain public recognition of your excellence.

Companies will be able to use the Awards logo on their corporate literature to give an extra competitive edge, as well as motivating their workforce.

Individuals will find the Award recognises their successes and gives a financial contribution to help them continue their career development.

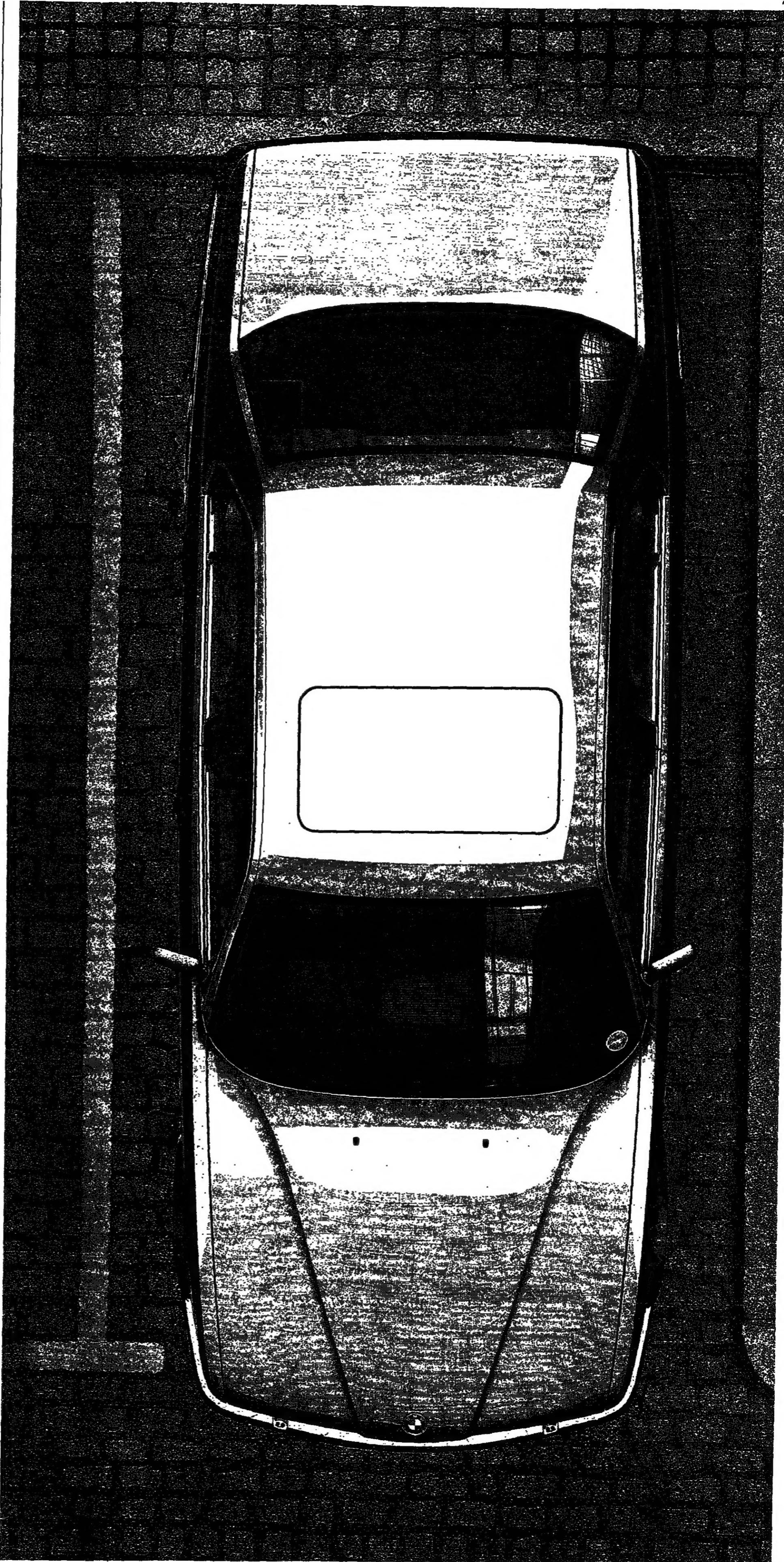
In addition to this, winners are invited to national and regional Award ceremonies which generate good publicity.

So reap the recognition you deserve by reaching for a National Training Award.

Act now to obtain free information about how to enter the Awards either as an employer or an individual by phoning

0800 616 400





THE FINE LINE BETWEEN LUXURY AND EXTRAVAGANCE.

Inside knowledge can be so valuable.

The biggest car fleet operator in Europe is a company called PHH AllStar. They're responsible for the care and maintenance of some 115,000 cars: a figure that includes 900 Jaguars, 1,800 Mercedes and 4,200 BMWs.

PHH compile regular surveys of their cars' costs: they're essential to the success of their business.

The surveys are of course, totally objective and independent of any car manufacturer. But the results are quite unashamedly biased in favour of the BMW 7 Series.

| Running costs compared to the BMW 730i. | |
|---|-------|
| Mercedes S-Class | + 31% |
| Jaguar XJ6 2.9 Litres | + 77% |
| Jaguar XJ6 VUS 3.6 Litres | + 93% |

Figures based upon service, maintenance and repair costs of vehicles which have covered 24,000 miles.
All cars bought new between 1986 and 1991. Source: PHH AllStar December 1991.

Indeed, armed with this knowledge, one wonders what self-respecting Chief Executive could possibly be seen driving anything but the BMW 730i. (Especially by another Chief Executive.)

There's that nagging thought: if one's company car fails to demonstrate optimum efficiency, performance and drive, might the same be assumed of one's company?

To: BMW Information Service, Winterhill, Milton Keynes MK6 1HQ. Telephone 0908 249189.
Please send me further information on the BMW 7 Series, including details on the PHH running cost data and the name of my local dealer.

(Mr, Mrs, Miss etc.) Initial Surname _____

23.01.1992.01.06

Address _____

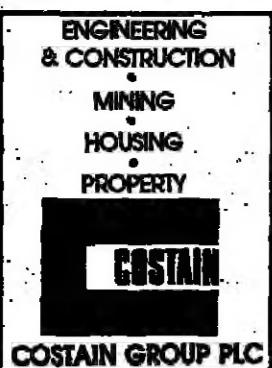
Town/County _____ Post Code _____

Telephone _____ Age if under 18 _____

Present Car _____ Year of reg. _____



THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE



Developing property in Derby

The Prison Service has awarded the contract for its new £72.5m headquarters building at St Mary's Wharf, Derby.

The development contract is with Hyperion Properties, the property arm of NPF, formerly the National Freight Corporation. Some 1,900 staff will work in the new building when it is finished in spring 1995 and it is planned that around 900 people will be recruited locally.

The move will bring together all the staff of the Prison Service Headquarters.

Oil platform

Sesa Petroleum has awarded AKER CONTRACTING the maintenance contract for the newly-installed Snorre platform. The value of the contract is between Nkr20-30m (£1.75m plus) and it will provide work for around 40 people.

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

Building ferry terminal at Hull French tourist attraction

The Fairclough Civil Engineering specialist, FAIRCLOUGH MARINE, has been awarded a design and construct contract worth almost £11m by Associated British Ports for a roll-on/roll-off ferry terminal at Hull.

The 13-month contract will include the construction of a jetty, a hydraulically operated shore ramp, berthing dolphins, protection dolphins, a traffic underpass, roadworks, a container handling area and a

£24m orders awarded to Hall & Tawse

HALL & TAWSE, the construction division of Raine Industries, has been awarded £24m worth of contracts.

Nottingham-based Hall & Tawse Eastern has won a £2.7m contract to construct a two-storey science and technology building at Derbyshire College of Higher Education - plus a £1.6m contract to build a research centre in Loughborough for British Gas.

The move will bring together all the staff of the Prison Service Headquarters.

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Severn crossing development project

HENRY BARRETT STEEL BUILDINGS, part of the Henry Barrett Group, the steel stockholding, construction and industrial fasteners group, has won a £400,000 order for two purpose-made casting sheds to be built at either end of the new second Severn crossing.

large car parking area of 12.3 acres.

Due to start on site in July, Fairclough Marine anticipates completion in August 1993.

Being constructed for North Sea Ferries, the roll-on/roll-off facility is being designed for the new 23,000 tonnes "superfreighter" ferries which are to be introduced.

Fairclough Civil Engineering has also been selected to construct the A27 Westhampton bypass near Chichester, West

Sussex, for the Department of Transport under a contract valued at almost £7m.

Scheduled for completion in the spring of 1993, Fairclough's contract comprises a two mile dual two-lane carriageway bypassing the village of Westhampton. The project also includes alterations to local roads affected by the bypass.

Fairclough Civil Engineering is part of AMEC, the international construction, engineering and development group.

HALL & TAWSE has secured two contracts totalling £2.1m to fit-out Marks & Spencer stores in Paisley and Inverness.

A 68-bed hospital is being constructed in Reading by Hall & Tawse Southern for Independent British Hospitals at a cost of £2.7m.

The Stourbridge-based Hall & Tawse Western has been awarded refurbishment con-

tracts for £500,000 with the West Midlands Police Authority, and for £400,000 with Birmingham City Council, to upgrade Cockshut Hill School in Yardley.

Hall & Tawse Partnership, the social housing specialist, has won a £1m contract from Redland Housing Association to design and build 26 dwellings in the Avon village of Camerton.

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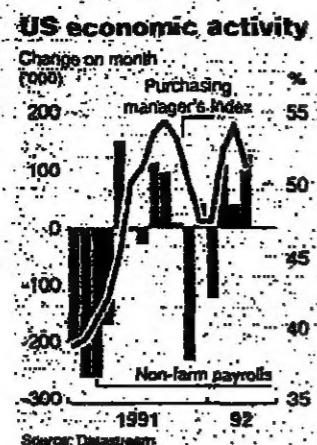
Figures may confirm US recovery but cast doubt on German growth

A FLURRY of statistics from the US and Germany this week should point to further recovery in the US economy but may cast some doubt over strongly Germany is growing.

The closely watched National Association of Purchasing Managers' index, which is released later today, is expected to indicate further gains in US business optimism last month while labour market statistics on Friday should reveal further growth in non-farm payrolls.

Economic data from Germany is likely to be mixed. Thursday's gross national product figures are expected to show robust growth in the first quarter, partly because good weather in the period encouraged construction. Figures for industrial production and orders in April and unemployment in western Germany in May are likely to point to weak economic activity.

In Britain, the Halifax house price index for May will be studied closely for any sign of recovery in the depressed housing market following the Conservative government's election victory.



account (seasonally adjusted A\$350m deficit, unadjusted A\$680m deficit), building approvals (flat).

Tomorrow: Denmark, referendum on Maastricht Treaty. May forex reserves. US presidential primaries in Alabama and California. April leading indicators (up 0.3 per cent), new home sales (up 7 per cent). UK, May official reserves (up \$100m), April final money supply data. Australia, first-quarter real GDP (up adjusted 1.3 per cent).

Wednesday: US, April factory orders (up 1 per cent), factory shipments, May 21-30 auto sales (6.3m). Germany, parliamentary mediation committee meets on Bundesbank restructuring. Finance minister Theo Waigel meets state prime ministers to discuss fiscal plans. UK, May Halifax house price index. Canada, May foreign reserves, March inventories to shipments ratio.

Thursday: Germany, regular Bundesbank council meeting (no changes expected), first-quarter GNP (up 1.5 per cent on quarter), May unemployment-West (up 16,500 adjusted), April employment-West (up

9,500 adjusted). May unemployment-East (down 25,000 unadjusted), short-time work-East (down 25,000). US, 1991 real capital spending, initial claims for week to May 23 (400,000), money supply for week to May 25. UK, April IMT-basis trade and current account balances, foreign bond investment.

Friday: US, May non-farm payrolls (up 103,000), manufacturing payrolls (up 15,000), unemployment rate (7.2 per cent), hourly earnings (up 0.3 per cent), average work-week, April consumer credit (up 0.1bn). Japan, April IMT-basis trade and current account balances, foreign bond investment.

During the week: Germany, April import prices (up 0.1 per cent on month, down 2.4 per cent on year), industrial production (down 0.2 per cent on year), manufacturing output (down 0.4 per cent), orders (flat), trade balance (DM3bn surplus), current account (DM500m deficit). France, April M3 (up 0.3 per cent on month).

Peter Norman

RESULTS DUE

BOOTS, the retail and pharmaceutical company, is expected on Thursday to announce a rise in annual pre-tax profits from £15m to about £20m, excluding property disposals.

Attention will be focused on margins at Boots The Chemist, and on attempts to turnaround Halfords and Do-It-All. Earnings are likely to have risen from 46.1p to 48p.

Thames Water, largest of the privatised water companies, may announce an increase in annual pre-tax profit of less than £20m to £20m or so, next Tuesday.

Siebe, the engineering and controls group, is likely to be questioned closely on North American trading next Wednesday.

while the dividend increase is expected to be 10 per cent. As its area is one of the worst affected by drought, its views on metering will be of interest. It will also be questioned on progress on its £4bn capital spending programme, including the London ring main, and on the level of contribution from its water treatment division, including acquisitions in the US and the former east Germany.

Reed, the engineering and controls group, is likely to be questioned closely on North American trading next Wednesday.

Optimists are forecasting a modest advance in annual pre-tax profits from £15m to £16.2m, with the more pessimistic pitching for a decline to £15m. On the top side, earnings edge up from 46.1p to 48p. Both parties agree strong cash generation is likely to have cut the high gearing.

Reed International, the publishing and information group, reports its annual results on Wednesday, with some analysts expecting a small decline compared with last year's pre-tax profits figure of £18.8m. However, Reed is expected to show

strong growth once the recession is clearly over.

De La Rue, the UK-based security printer and payment machine maker, is expected to report pre-tax profits of about £20m, up from £18.9m, when it announces annual results on Tuesday. The group which has been successfully turned around by Mr Jeremy Marshall, chief executive and formerly of Hanson, has succeeded in getting to cut more costs. These profits would represent 32.1p of earnings and analysts expect the dividend to increase from 13.7p to 15p.

UK COMPANIES

TODAY COMPANY MEETINGS: Bodenrite Ind., The Holiday Inn, Executive Plaza Midland, Peter Street, Manchester, 10.30

Dales Estates, The Reading Room, 100 High St, Mil Lane, Shirehampton, Bristol, 11.00

Eddies, 60 Fountain Street, Manchester, 10.30

Hallmark, The County Court Hotel, Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, 10.30

Montague Chase, London Bridge, S.E. 1, 2.00

Perpetual TSB Bank Channel Islands

WEDNESDAY JUNE 3 COMPANY MEETINGS: Elys (Whitemeadow), 23-26 Castle Street, Wolverhampton, 12.00

Cliff Resources, The Great Eastern House, Liverpool Street, E.C. 2, 12.00

Creditkards, The Palace Hotel, Central Promenade, Douglas, Isle of Man, 12.00

Jameson (Thomas), 2 Swan Road, South West Ind. Estate, Peterlee, County Durham, 12.00

Kingfisher, The Dorchester, Park Lane, W.1, 12.00

Lambeth Palace, Lambeth Palace, London, 12.00

Montague Chase, London Bridge, S.E. 1, 12.00

Perpetual TSB Bank Channel Islands

Sheldene, Birkenhead, 12.00

Spencer's, Hatfield, Herts, 12.00

Swallow Hotel, South Normanton, Derbyshire, 12.15

Swiss TV, Caledonian, Glasgow, 12.00

Thorn, Merchant Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland, 12.00

Whitbread, The Meridian Hotel, Piccadilly, W.1, 12.00

Winton, Berties Banqueting Suite, Brooke Street, Eland, Hertfordshire, 12.00

Woodbridge, Swallow Hotel, South Normanton, Derbyshire, 12.15

Westgate, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.30

THURSDAY JUNE 4 COMPANY MEETINGS: Antipodes, Europe, Marlow, 12.00

Boards, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Camelot, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Chase Waterworks, Colindale, 12.00

Edwards, 100 Newgate Street, E.C. 1, 12.00

Fabrik, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

FBI, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Fidelity Microsystems, Finsbury, London, 12.00

IPV, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Reed Int., The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Rodfinson Securities, 25-28

St. James's Place Capital, 25-28

Sheriff, 100 Newgate Street, E.C. 1, 12.00

Siemens, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

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FRIDAY JUNE 5 COMPANY MEETINGS: African Lakes Corp., 24 Gilbert Street, W.1, 12.00

Bentle, Guildhall, Kingston

upon Thames, 12.00

City Centre Restaurants, The George Hotel, George Street, Edinburgh, 11.00

Downdraft, Merchant Taylors Hall, Aldwark, York, 12.00

House of Larceny, Metropole Hotel, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, 12.00

Interiors, The Meridian Hotel, Piccadilly, W.1, 12.00

Innkeeper's, The Palace Hotel, London, 12.00

Montague Chase, London Bridge, S.E. 1, 12.00

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PARLIAMENTARY DIARY

TODAY

Commons: Not sitting. Lords: Debate on safety aspects of ship design and technology. King's Cross Railway Bill (second reading).

TUESDAY Commons: Defence questions, Prime Minister's questions, Finance Bill (second reading), Non-domestic Rating Bill (remaining stages).

Lords: Protection of Badgers Bill, Trade Union and Labour Relations (consolidation) Bill, Tribunals and Enquiries Bill, Prisoner and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Bill.

WEDNESDAY Commons: Debate on tenants rights, opportunities and participation.

Lords: Not sitting.

QUESTIONS. EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Commons: Not sitting. Lords: Debate on safety aspects of ship design and technology. King's Cross Railway Bill (second reading).

THURSDAY Commons: Agriculture questions, Prime Minister's questions, European Communities (Amendment) Bill (committee stage, 2nd day).

Lords: Debate on the committee work of the House.

FRIDAY Commons: Defence questions, Prime Minister's questions, Finance Bill (second reading), Non-domestic Rating Bill (remaining stages).

Lords: Protection of Badgers Bill, Trade Union and Labour Relations (consolidation) Bill, Tribunals and Enquiries Bill, Prisoner and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Bill.

SUNDAY JUNE 6 Cleveland Place 7pc Deb 1988/1993 C50

Do. Inc. 2pc

Automated Security 2.83p

Boeing 30.25

City Centre Restaurants 1.01p

Epwin 4.5p

European Publications 6p

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MANAGEMENT

Sir John Harvey-Jones is one of Britain's best-known businessmen. Through the BBC's "Troubleshooter" series, he brought the secrets of management to the living rooms of the British viewing public. Troubleshooter was a great success, attracting the highest audiences ever for a business series.

However, not all the companies involved are complimentary about Sir John's management skills. Some even claim that they were duped by the BBC, being told that the series was a documentary about business and not an investigation into their company.

Two years after broadcast, Sir John's troubleshooting on the six companies involved has had mixed results. The Shropshire District Health Authority and Copella Fruit Juices successfully followed his advice, although they did not stick to his timetable.

Ariport Computers adopted much of the strategy that Sir John outlined, and profits have risen as a result. However, the company claims that the publicity from the programme was the "worst place of PR we ever encountered". Triang was bought by the French corporation Superjouet, in spite of Sir John's efforts, and ceased trading in the UK altogether.

Right from the outset, The Morgan Motor Company was resistant to Sir John's advice. Two years on the company is flourishing, despite having ignored all the Troubleshooter's recommendations.

In March 1989, when Sir John first visited the Malvern-based company, the waiting period for a Morgan car was over 10 years and the factory produced just nine cars a week. Turnover and profit plateaued in 1984, but Peter and Charles Morgan, father and son partners in the family business, were secure in the strong demand for their product. They showed a great reluctance to increase production by any means that might spoil the cachet attached to Britain's only hand-made motor-

Kate Button assesses how Sir John Harvey-Jones protégés have fared two years after starring on TV

Toil and trouble

car.

The Morgans maintained a low selling price, a tradition that promoted Morgan as an affordable luxury. They were, however, aware of the need to increase profit to allow for future investment. In an effort to preserve the car's prestige, their strategy was to make a small increase in production of a car a week.

Sir John's solution was more radical. He suggested almost doubling output, producing an extra 300 cars a year, slicing the waiting list in half, and increasing the price of the car. "He looked at Morgan from an accountant's point of view," says Charles Morgan. "Sir John failed to take into account the fact that Morgan wants to be here in 100 years' time." It seems that Sir John was intent on squeezing the company into a mould abhorrent to its owners.

The Morgans continued on their original course, despite Sir John's warning that the Morgan Motor Company would disappear down a black hole of increasing labour and material costs.

Three years later, despite a decline in the classic car market, the Morgan is up and running. The company has increased its profits from £488,000 in 1989 to £910,000 last

year, a performance which has made the Morgans damning of Sir John's troubleshooting skills.

"He has his own inimitable style," says Charles Morgan, "whether that is suited to British business I do not know. He's certainly not the guru that I would turn to in the motor industry." Charles Morgan is currently taking an MBA in business studies at Coventry Polytechnic where he has been learning of management systems more to his liking than those preached by Sir John.

The Morgans deny accusations that they run the Morgan Motor Company as a hobby and claim that the proof of a professionally run business is strong profit and a solid customer base. "We have both," says Charles Morgan.

Sir John enjoyed more success troubleshooting at Churchill Tableware, a ceramics company in Stoke-on-Trent.

The company, run by the three Roper brothers, made a record profit of £5m in 1988, but the following year the domestic tableware division went into serious decline. When Sir John arrived at Churchill, he was faced with the problem of cutting costs while establishing a niche in the domestic tableware market. Sir John demanded more investment in design, increasing the quality and range of products. He also suggested a higher level of automation to reduce the high wage bill (then 36 per cent of production). He estimated £1m a year could be saved by installing machines that would cut 100 jobs.

According to Michael Roper, this was not economically viable. "We did invest in some machines, but a single machine can cost £50,000 and an employee in Stoke costs £200 a week. You have to weigh it up on the short term and the long term."



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Neither do the brothers agree on the point of internal conflict. Stephen Roper says: "With regard to the three of us working together, I don't believe that there ever was a problem. I think that was just the 'Troubleshooter' programme looking for an angle that didn't exist."

Nevertheless, the Ropers have spent more on design and now sell an upmarket range which has successfully established itself in the market. They also took time out of the office for brainstorming sessions on strategy, and have relinquished many of the problem-solving tasks to a grateful management, who indeed showed their true potential.

With pretax profit up to £3m in 1991, the Ropers still turn to Sir John for advice long after the "Troubleshooter" series was broadcast. "Sir John's visit was an extremely positive episode in the life of Churchill. He acted as a catalyst. His visit galvanised more action than we were prepared to take at that stage," says Stephen Roper.

Sir John's degree of success varies, depending on who sits in judgement. He does not claim to be a management consultant nor a business guru, but states his prime objective was to correct some of the anti-business feeling that he convinced exists in Britain and raise the awareness of the British public in commercial matters. In this respect, he undeniably succeeded.

The great top-down fallacy

Is your company trying to become leaner, faster and more competitive by "empowering" its employees? If so, and the company is British, there is a strong chance that it is going about the process in the wrong way.

First, too many UK companies start the change process from grand abstractions such as "culture" or "better communications", rather than from challenges which people in the front line can understand, such as specific aspects of better customer service.

Second, companies fall for the "top-down" fallacy: the idea that all the necessary changes (new structures, reward mechanisms and so on) should be decided at the top of the company, and then "cascaded" down the organisation.

Instead, a "top-bottom-middle" approach is far more effective, in which the initiative for changing all sorts of smaller-scale company practices is handed directly to local teams in the places where the issues manifest themselves. As these local initiatives begin to bite, middle managers then help in dealing with them, and in learning how to encourage rather than frustrate further efforts.

Third, too many companies attempt to spread the learning created through these local initiatives by trying to "draw it up to the top" and push it down again. Instead, they should promote learning across the organisation.

Fourth, changes in the company's infrastructure - its formal organisation, pay mechanisms, budgeting systems and so on - should be left until after the other steps. Most British companies try to change such structures first.

These four tips form the essence of a short monograph on "building the empowered organisation", just published by Kinsley Lord, a London-based consultancy specialising in the management of change.

Though primarily a promotional tool, the booklet is of wider value for the challenges it throws at UK management. Contrary to sceptics' claims, it instils that empowerment is possible in Britain. But it has a sting in its tail: "The question for British chief executives is whether they have the conviction, the will and the ability to lead their companies in this way".

Christopher Lorenz

Secretaries resent their bosses: bosses treat their secretaries as mindless typing machines. The relationship in Britain is famously poor: the latest survey by the Industrial Society showed that secretaries do not like secretaries who stand up for themselves, show confidence or have a sense of humour.

In defiance of this image, a leading City figure and his loyal, long-serving secretary recently took to the stage at a conference in London to prove just how perfect the relationship could be.

George Mallinckrodt, executive chairman of Schroders, the merchant bank, and Janice Nowak described to a couple of hundred

well-groomed top secretaries how to make the "partnering" work.

According to Mallinckrodt, the secretary's main job is to organise him. To do this she needs to be a skilful diplomat, capable of deciding which of the "900 prima donnas" within the company has time to see. She must also play the ambassador, speak many foreign languages, know when Ramadan is, and be able to recognise voices on the phone she has only heard once before. She must have a photo-

graphic memory, anticipate all his needs, and remind him to write thank-you letters.

Nowak, an articulate graduate in languages seemed to take this demanding job in her stride. The skills she found necessary to accomplish the task were:

● Understanding. "You must understand the aims of the person and how they work" she warned. "If he says ten minutes, but you know it will take three quarters of an hour, plan for that, but don't let

him know."

● Communication. This is essential: "He must tell you what is going on, where and why." The communication must work both ways.

● Anticipation. If he is going on a trip, make sure he has the papers he is likely to need when he gets there.

● Memory. "If you can't remember something said to you three to six months ago, you'll look silly".

● Admit failure. "If you have made a mistake or forgotten some

thing, admit it at once."

The lessons seemed lost on the audience. It would appear that this vision of give and take, with a boss who loves to be organised, and a happy, fulfilled secretary is not the norm.

The other secretaries attending the London conference entitled "Successful Partnership with the Boss", organised by IHR conference group, seemed concerned by more mundane affairs. Their bosses would not surrender their dairies,

they complained, and got furious every time they were double booked. Some secretaries said that word processors had given them even more work to do: bosses insisted that letters and memos be changed a dozen times before sending them out. Others who worked for two bosses found that each time they did something for one of them, the other sulked.

The main complaint from the high-flyers was that they were expected to work longer and longer hours, had more tasks delegated to them, but felt forever excluded from the management team.

Lucy Kellaway

Secret confessions of a secretary

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● Communication. This is essential: "He must tell you what is going on, where and why." The communication must work both ways.

● Anticipation. If he is going on a trip, make sure he has the papers he is likely to need when he gets there.

● Memory. "If you can't remember something said to you three to six months ago, you'll look silly".

● Admit failure. "If you have made a mistake or forgotten some

thing, admit it at once."

The lessons seemed lost on the audience. It would appear that this vision of give and take, with a boss who loves to be organised, and a happy, fulfilled secretary is not the norm.

The other secretaries attending the London conference entitled "Successful Partnership with the Boss", organised by IHR conference group, seemed concerned by more mundane affairs. Their bosses would not surrender their dairies,

they complained, and got furious every time they were double booked. Some secretaries said that word processors had given them even more work to do: bosses insisted that letters and memos be changed a dozen times before sending them out. Others who worked for two bosses found that each time they did something for one of them, the other sulked.

The main complaint from the high-flyers was that they were expected to work longer and longer hours, had more tasks delegated to them, but felt forever excluded from the management team.

Lucy Kellaway

THE ALLOCATION OF RADIO SPECTRUM

London, 22 & 23 June 1992

Advances in technology have led to a mushrooming in important communications services that need radio to operate. Huge investment is needed to develop new services such as satellite telephones, global radio programmes, HDTV and space communications.

Questions to be addressed include:

- How should the radio spectrum be allocated?
- What services should be run on it
— competing or monopoly?
- How can transnational services be co-ordinated?

Speakers include:

Ambassador Jan Baran
Chairman of the US Delegation to WARC '92

Mr Jean Grenier
Eutelsat

Rear-Admiral Robert Walmsley
Ministry of Defence

Mr Jerrold Adams
Iridium Inc

Mr Mike Tiplady
Cetnet

Mr Michael Goddard
European Radiocommunications Committee

Dr John Forrest
National Transcommunications Ltd

Mr Richard Jay Solomon
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Mr Chris Earnshaw
British Telecommunications plc

Mr Guntis Berzins
Irmarsat

Financial Times Conference Organisation
126 Jermyn Street, London SW1Y 4UJ, UK
Tel: 071-825 2323. Fax: 27347 FTCONF G. Fax: 071-925 2125

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Type of Business _____

CREDIT & CHARGE CARDS

The FT proposes to publish this survey on July 3 1992.

In addition to the Financial Times excellent profile against cardholders, the Survey will also be seen by 40% of Board Directors in the UK whose main responsibility is Finance and Accounting. If you want to reach this important audience, call Alicia Andrews on 071 873 3565 or fax 071 873 3062.

Date source: BMRC Business Survey 1990

COMPANY NOTICES

NEW KLEINFONTEIN PROPERTIES LIMITED

Chancery Lane, London EC2A 3AJ

Reg No. 02054540

CAUTIONARY ANNOUNCEMENT

Pursuant to the cautionary announcement dated 21 February 1992, BOE Merchant Bank Limited is authorised to announce that the proposed sale will be conditional upon the finalisation of the proposed acquisition of New Kleinfontein Properties Ltd. from a variable asset structure. Should these proposals be implemented, they could have a positive effect on the price of NEP's ordinary shares. NEP's shareholders are accordingly advised to exercise caution in their dealings with such assets as a Bill environment is created, which is expected to be in or about 30 June 1992.

Information may be obtained from the Secretary, BOE Merchant Bank Limited, 128 Chancery Lane, London EC2A 3AJ or 01 839 1200.

1 June 1992

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23 May 1992

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ARTS

Architecture/Colin Amery

Glittering history in Portman Square

Astronomer is a thing to celebrate and the flags are up in London's Portman Square to mark 20 years of remarkable achievement of London's Heinz Gallery. It was in May 1972 that the Queen opened the Heinz Gallery of the Royal Institute of British Architects. This generous gift to England from Mr and Mrs Henry J. Heinz II has been responsible for the rejuvenation of interest in architectural history, drawings and models in a way that has been quite extraordinary.

Brilliant curatorship and the encouragement of young architectural historians have kept the Heinz at the forefront of both knowledge and exhibition. It is only the visible tip of the iceberg of one of the world's richest collections of architectural drawings.

To celebrate its twentieth birthday the Heinz gallery is showing a miscellany of recent acquisitions in a lively and enthralling display. It is a pleasure to enter the darkened room that Alan Irvine designed for the Heinz Gallery — there are two reasons. First it is like going into a richly stocked and glittering shop of architectural drawings and models — sadly none of them are for sale. Second, the gallery itself, which normally plays a subservient role to the collection, can now be seen to have been a very successful, elegant and calm setting for a diversity of exhibition displays. When Alan Irvine, of the architects Buzza and Irvine, designed it he was much influenced by the work of the Italian architect Carlo Scarpa. I think it is that sense

of Italian style that has given the Heinz a lasting elegance — something that is quite rare in London galleries.

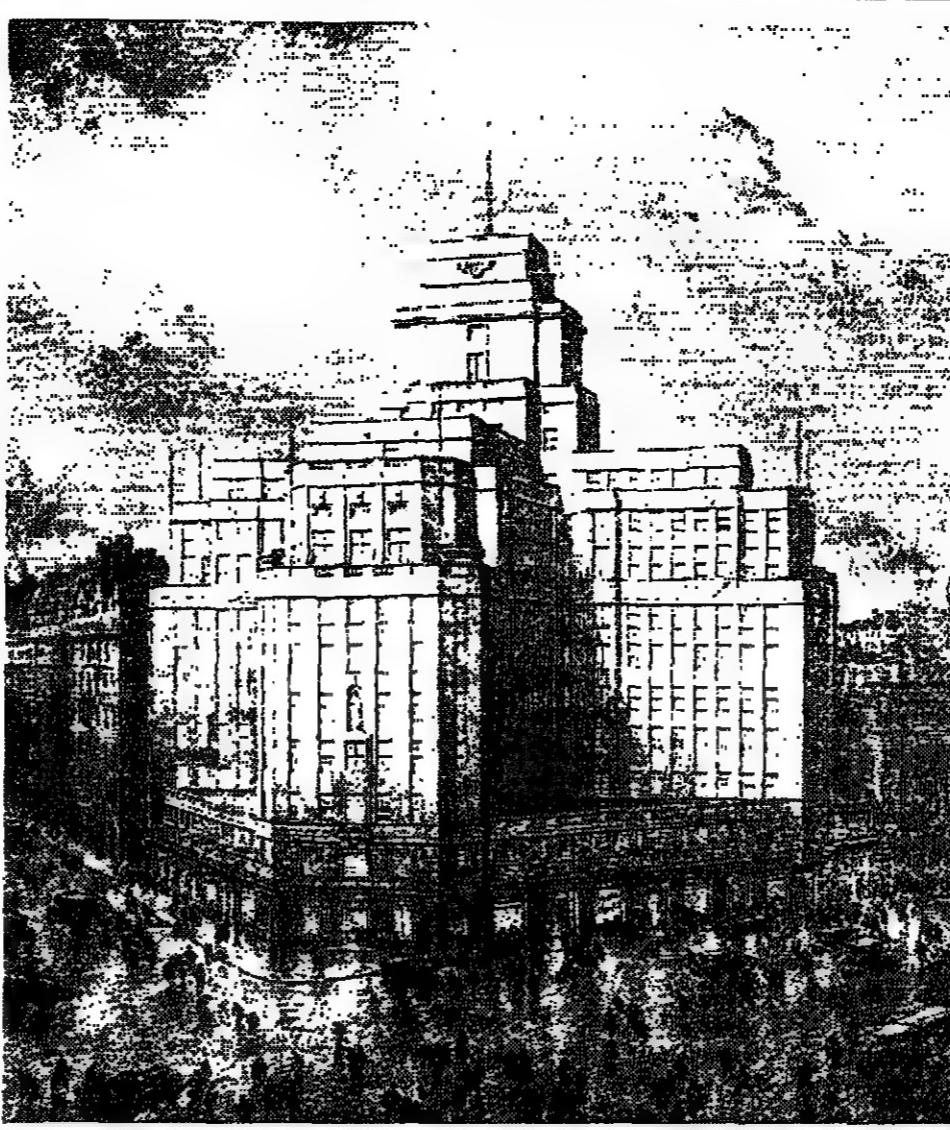
The current exhibition is an enjoyable miscellany that reveals the discernment which has always marked the acquisition policy of the RIBA Drawings Collection. It is a catholic policy that wisely takes an inclusive historian's view and tries, perhaps not entirely consciously, to avoid the divisive polemics which have polarised the recent architectural debate. Modern architects will have their place in history and it is right that stylistic considerations should sometimes take a back seat. The quality of the recent acquisitions remains remarkably high despite the virtual non-existence of any RIBA purchasing budget. The collection has always been fortunate in its donors and the long tenure of the first curator, Mr John Harris, certainly brought about a complete change in the value of architectural drawings, both aesthetically and financially.

Rich gifts continue to enhance the collection and the donation of some 150 drawings by Joseph Bonomi (1739-1808), who was invited to England by the Adam brothers, is one of the most generous recent examples. It is possible to see in the exhibition his drawings for the great house outside Glasgow, Rosneath, now sadly demolished. Another eighteenth century practitioner who has been added to the collection is Giacomo Leoni (c.1686-1746). In the form of an album of drawings for a London house in Arlington Street,

His importance as the publisher of the first edition of Palladio's "Works" cannot be underestimated.

I enjoyed seeing the lovely drawings for the grotto at Oatlands by Stephen Wright and the drawing by Isaac Ware (who died in 1766) of an unexecuted design for Westminster Bridge. The design model by C.R. Cockerell (1788-1863) of Langton House in Dorset is a poignant reminder of another great house that has been sadly demolished. George Gilbert Scott is well represented in the collection and the addition of the drawings for Kelham Hall are both important and interesting examples of his domestic work. The nineteenth century was a rich period for presentation drawings and a dense output of material from the leading architects has posed major cataloguing problems for the collection. Models too can impose storage problems but they are important and much enjoyed by the public. How sad, for example, that all that remains of the City of London's glorious cast-iron Coal Exchange is the architect's model.

The twentieth century is almost over and the collection and this exhibition shows both the strengths and weaknesses of the period. Lutyens's sketchbook for Munstead Wood, on long-term loan from the Lutyns family, is an enticing hint of the development that was to come of his early twentieth century country houses. Sketches so often reveal more than the finished drawings and this particular sketch book has a freshness and humour and



London offices designed by Adams, Holden & Pearson for London Electric Railways (c.1927)

courtesy that is enchanting.

Cosy is not a word to be applied to the work of Eero Saarinen — the refugee who brought some of the Bauhaus tradition to England and left behind in London the Trellick Tower in North Kensington (where the architect lived for two weeks to show how wonderful life was in a tower block as long as you could retreat to Hampstead) and London's Elephant and Castle development

for the London County Council. The work of Tecton is shown in the exhibition by their drawings that showed how prefabricated houses could be treated with a variety of facades — an exercise carried out for Peterlee New Town in 1948. Patrick Gwynne shines out as an interesting and neglected modern architect with his Blackheath houses that stand as modest beacons of successful new house design

of the 1960s.

It is time to cheer for the Heinz Gallery and all its works and to hope that its original and stimulating approach to architecture and architectural history will long continue in Portman Square.

The current celebratory exhibition continues until June 13 at the Heinz Gallery, 21 Portman Square, London W1.

Sponsorship

Appliance of science

The recession is having one salutary effect on arts sponsorship. It is forcing them to evaluate their expenditure more scientifically. In the past companies distributed largess freely, often deriving little in return but a warm glow. Now chief executives, and especially finance directors, want a justification for the budget. What were the objectives of the sponsorship and were they realised?

Unfortunately extensive market research into particular events can cost almost as much as the original sponsorship, but, some companies, such as Lloyds, undertake an assessment as a matter of course. It evaluated its investment in the Age of Chivalry exhibition at the Royal Academy, and constantly measures the impact of its Young Musician of the Year link with the BBC. BMW, which last week supported the opening concert of the Bath Festival, is another company which researches its carefully pinpointed sponsored events.

The latest to buy sponsorship research, through consultancy Millward Brown, which specialises in the field, is NatWest. It made a big commitment this year to Welsh National Opera's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, putting in £250,000 to ensure that the production fully realised the director's ambitions.

NatWest felt it was worth while measuring the result. The research suggested that most (72 per cent) of the audience at the performances were aware that NatWest sponsored the opera (way ahead of the 51 per cent norm at a sponsored event), and they approved, appreciating that the production gained from the money. An unexpected finding was that the audience felt NatWest should have banged the drum of its involvement more loudly.

Millward Brown also quizzed NatWest's guests, the 50 or so existing or potential customers that it invited to each performance. Here again they welcomed the opportunity to meet their bank managers in a social context, believing it would make doing business easier. NatWest will use the findings to plan future sponsorships. It is aware that such research is necessarily superficial. It cannot examine any increase in brand awareness, or appreciation of NatWest, among the wider public and, anyway, the reaction of the audience, and guests, is likely to be favourable.

Ironically this more business-like approach comes at a time when NatWest is reducing its sponsorship budget in the wake of falling profits. But this way the future lies. ABSA is devising a research facility for interested sponsors. It is well aware that the case for backing the arts has to be made more forcefully and persuasively in the current climate. It also knows that research could show that sponsorship is a waste of time and money. But measuring the effectiveness of sponsorship will inevitably become more important in the cash-straitened future.

On June 13, Plácido Domingo celebrates his 21st year as a Covent Garden star, singing a title role in *Samson et Dalila* — and at the same time helping Midland Bank to mark its 21st

year as a Covent Garden sponsor. The Midland Bank Proms, through which all the seats are removed from the stalls of the Opera House and 700 mainly youthful, enthusiastic sit on the floor for just £9, must be the longest major continuous arts sponsorship in the UK.

It is one that excellently suits both parties. Covent Garden sheds its artist image for a few days and Midland Bank is seen in favourable light by its target audience of bright young things. It is an occasion now bathed in history with no plans to break the connection.

The cost for Midland has risen sharply. At the first Prom, on September 28 1972, the audience paid just 50p. The Bank makes up to Covent Garden the difference between a sold-out stalls, with seat prices ranging from £70 up to £150 (for the Domingo night) and the £9 bargain. It will foot a £250,000 bill this year, for an anniversary celebration, the five nights of opera include not only Domingo, but Maria Ewing in *Salomé*, and the first night, next Monday, of a new production of *Der fliegende Holländer*.

All told over 100,000 Prom-goers have attended 143 opera and ballet performances on the cheap. This year the number will be boosted by the transmission on June 13 of *Samson et Dalila* live on the big screen into the Covent Garden plaza. Not surprisingly, given its financial problems, the Midland has cut its arts sponsorship in the last two years but it is staying faithful to the Garden. As well as the Proms it backs the regional tour by Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Next year a British writer will scoop up the £30,000 David Cohen British Literature Prize in recognition of a lifetime's achievement at the typewriter/word processor. This will be the Big One, beating in value the other leading book awards, the Booker, by £10,000, and the NCR, by £5,000. The Arts Council will chip in another £10,000 which goes to a young writer of the winner's choice.

The cheque will be issued by Coutts Bank. Coutts has long literary traditions — Dickens, Browning and Tennyson were customers — and it is supplying the Arts Council and the David Cohen Trust with back up in organising the prize.

Coutts carries out some discreet sponsorship of its own. It organises concerts for its clients at which students of the Royal College of Music play with established soloists. Earlier this year guitarist John Williams performed; later this year it's the turn of percussionist Evelyn Glennie.

While more and more sponsors fail to renew their connections, arts sponsorship could still grow this year, thanks to small sponsors dipping their toe in the water.

The latest group to show an interest in hairdressers, Graham Webb International has put up £1,000 to bring the National Youth Jazz Orchestra to the Sevenoaks Festival. Last year a Hoxton salon, Sherlock Hair Shop, contributed £1,000 to coax Phoenix Dance Company to the Northumbrian town.

Antony Thornecroft

Theatre

Russia comes to Israel



Igal Naor as Yehu (right) and Alex Peleg as Zif in 'Yehu' at the Habimah National Theatre

are the informers so familiar in a communist society.

Yet the Gesher Theatre is not stopping there. Its members are busy learning Hebrew several hours a day. Russian, on the other hand, will become the second language of the theatre in Israel.

English is far behind, except

in translation. Here again is a curious fact: nearly half of Shakespeare's plays have never been translated into Hebrew.

Horowitz is a left-wing playwright and initially it was thought odd that he should take on such a subject. Stern is emerging as rather a romantic figure, which indeed, with his academic background, he was

to be regarded as artificial and the history plays are irrelevant.

None of the Henrys. I was told by Gary Blau, the principle of the Beit Zvi School of Stage and Cinematic Art, have ever been put into Hebrew. Yet his own school is commissioning and performing Hebrew texts of virtually any modern English play you can find.

We dropped in at a student rehearsal of Charlotte Hazeley's *My Mother Said I Never Should*. Blau said that his school is British-oriented and

its principles based on RADA; what he wants to see, however, is practically the entire theatrical canon available in Hebrew.

There is an absence of translations from Spanish. The Greek classics have been translated, but seldom performed. A forthcoming production of *Oedipus* at the Municipal Theatre in Haifa — one of Israel's top three venues — is regarded as important by its director because it will show how different Greek drama was.

Thus the voyage of discovery continues, yet it would be strong to say that the indigenous theatre has gone to sleep. The fashionable view is that since the outbreak of the intifada on the west bank in 1987, Israeli dramatists have been practising a kind of self-censorship and have withdrawn from political theatre. That was probably true as the shock of the uprising sank in. Two recent productions, however, suggest a reawakening.

The first is *Yeru* by Danny Horowitz at the Haifa Municipal. This is the story of Avraham Stern, the terrorist or freedom fighter who decided it was legitimate to seek an alliance with the Germans in the fight against the British. Stern was killed by the British in 1942 in circumstances that have never been wholly explained.

Horowitz is a left-wing playwright and initially it was thought odd that he should take on such a subject. Stern is emerging as rather a romantic figure, which indeed, with his academic background, he was

gradually agreed to cooperate with the play and has been attending performances. As a production it is a trifle static, but it plainly breaks new ground. Horowitz says that he would like to go on to re-examine other parts of recent Israeli history.

That is exactly what happens in *Yehu* at the Habimah National Theatre in Tel Aviv. Gladys Evron's central character is taken from the Book of Kings — Yehu is a tyrant par excellence who has 70 members of the royal family beheaded. The theme, however, is unmistakably modern. It is that power corrupts today, just as it always has. No one seeing *Yehu* could fail to think of Israeli extremism run mad: it is also magnificently performed, notably a chilling mutual suicide scene.

Perhaps the most interesting production is yet to come, and again it is a case of bringing different cultures together. Next year there will be a production of *Romeo and Juliet* by the Jerusalem Wall with the Montagues played by Arabs in Arabic and the Capulets by Israelis in Hebrew. Traditional Islam, like traditional Hebrew, never had much room for theatre, but some of the Arabs are beginning to play a role. A mixture of Arab and Hebrew have already been tried successfully in *Waiting for Godot*. As in the Market Theatre in Johannesburg a few years ago, a drama has a healing as well as a disturbing influence.

Malcolm Rutherford

State Orchestra in works by Richard Strauss and Schumann, repeated tomorrow. Wed: Don Pasquale, Thurs and Sun: Cav and Pag. Fri: *Die Aegyptische Helena* with Glynn Jones. Sat: ballets by Balanchine and Kylian (221316). Fri and Sat at Gasteig: Sergiu Celibidache conducts Munich Philharmonic Orchestra. (48098 614).

● Theatre and concert tickets available at Konzertkasse Beck on 4th floor of Beck department store at Marienplatz 11

■ NEW YORK DANCE American Ballet Theatre's production of *Sleeping Beauty* runs daily till Thurs in the Metropolitan Opera House. Fri, Sat and next Mon: triple bill featuring Agnes de Mille's *The Other, Mats Ek's Grass and Ulysses Dove's Serious Pleasures*. ABT season runs till June 20 (362 6000). New York City Ballet repertory runs daily except Mon till June 28 in NY State Theater. Mikhail Baryshnikov gives the NY premiere of a new solo work by Mark Morris on June 16 (670 5570).

JAZZ This week at the Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant is singer Vicki Carr: showtimes at 21.00 and 23.30 daily from tomorrow till Sun (475 6592).

■ VIENNA MUSIC Staatsoper 20.00 Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts Bavarian

also Sun. Tomorrow: Der Fliegende Holländer. Wed and Sat: Boris Godunov. Thurs: Il barbiere di Siviglia. Fri: Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* (51444 2960).

Musikverein 19.30 Peter Keuschning conducts Ensemble Kontrapunkt in music by Ives, Copland and Milhaud. Fri: Mirella Freni and Nicolai Ghiaurov. (505 8190). Wed and Thurs in Konzerthaus: Okko Kamu conducts Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (712 1211).

THEATRE Günter Krämer directs a Vienna Festival production of Friedericke Roth's new play, *Erben und Sterben*, at the Messepalast daily till Thurs. Final performance tonight at Ronacher of Slovenian National Theatre production of Hamlet (586 1676).

■ ZURICH Opernhaus 20.00 Vienna Burgtheater in a stage recitation of Hofmannsthal's text for Der Rosenkavalier. Tomorrow: Rigoletto. Wed and Sat: La forza del destino. Thurs: Die Zauberflöte. Fri: L'italiana in Algeri (262 0909).

Tonhalle 19.30 Conton Percussion Ensemble in works by Varèse, Gnasterka and Chavez. Thurs: concert of Brazilian music (201 1580). Fri: Maurice André is soloist with Zurich Chamber Orchestra (252 1737).

European Cable and Satellite Business TV (all times CET) MONDAY TO FRIDAY

CNN 2000-2030, 2300-2330 World Business Today — a joint FT/CNN production with Grant Perry and Colin Chapman

Super Channel 0830-0900 (Mon) FT East Europe Report — weekly indepth analysis from FTV 2130-2200 (Tue) Media Europe — what's new in European media business

2130-2200 (Wed) FT Business Weekly — global business report with James Bellini

0830-0900 (Thurs) Media Europe 2130-2200 (Thurs) FT Eastern Europe Report

0830-0900 (Fri) FT Business Weekly

SATURDAY CNN 0600-0930 World Business This Week - a joint FT/CNN production 1900-1930 World Business This Week

Super Channel 1930-2000 FT Eastern Europe Report

SUNDAY CNN 1030-1100, 1800-1830 World Business This Week

Super Channel 1600-1630 FT Business Weekly Sky News 0130-0200 (Mon), 2130-2200 (Thurs), 0530-0630 (Fri) FT Business Weekly

INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE

AMSTERDAM Concertgebouw 20.15 Opening of the Holland Festival: tonight's performance features the Dutch National Ballet in choreographies by Hans van Manen, plus the Schoenberg Ensemble and other instrumental groups in music by Stockhausen, Nono, Milhaud, Stravinsky and Dallapiccola. Thurs: John Eliot Gardiner conducts Così fan tutte. Fri: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau sings Schubert. Sat: Ed de Waart conducts concert performance of Schreker's *Der Schatzgräber* (6718 345). Muziektheater 19.30 Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducts Alfred Kirchner's production of Don Giovanni. Runs till June 21, next performances on Thurs and Sat. Tomorrow, Wed, Fri and Sun: Nederlands Dans Theater in choreographies by Hans van Manen (6255 455).

BARCELONA Palau de la Musica 21.00 Alexis Weissenberg is piano soloist in

COPENHAGEN

Tivoli Koncertsalen 19.30 Signe Haugland plays Mozart's Bassoon Concerto with the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra. Tomorrow: Hans Zender conducts Ensemble InterContemporain in works by Donatoni, Zender, Dallapiccola and Schoenberg. Fri: concert performance of Cavalleria Rusticana (3315 1012).

FRANKFURT Tonight at the Alter Oper, Christian Mandeal conducts the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra in works by Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann, with the Lebewe Sisters. Fri: Dmitri Kitaenko conducts works by Gesualdo,

LONDON

FINANCIAL TIMES

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL
Tel: 071-873 3000 Telex: 922186 Fax: 071-407 5700
Monday June 1 1992

The road to Rio

THE EARTH Summit, which gets under way in Rio on Wednesday, could hardly be described as a happy event. The tortuous two-year preparations have exposed a world far from united on the size and even the nature of the environmental threat that faces it. Deep divisions have appeared between the rich and poor countries over who should shoulder responsibility for the damage that has been caused already and over what should be done to prevent more damage in future.

Only a week ago, Mr Carlo Ripa di Meana, the EC Environment Commissioner, decided not to attend, denouncing the gathering as a cocktail party with a pre-arranged outcome, a view which many undoubtedly share.

Such disengagement is not altogether a bad thing. This cumbersome event, with its 800 page agenda, was never likely to achieve anything of immediate significance. Yet it was in danger of raising false hopes all around the world - among those in the industrialised countries who saw it as the trigger for global environmental action, and among those in developing countries who were hoping for fresh flows of aid.

None of these hopes will be realised; that much is now clear. But this is no reason for questioning the value of holding the summit at all; it means that more realistic yardsticks are needed.

In one sense, Rio has already achieved some success merely by identifying issues and drawing a large number of constituents into the debate. We may not have the answers, but the questions, at least, are clearer.

Species extinction

Have environmental pressures - for example pollution of the atmosphere and the sea, or the pace of species extinction - advanced from being local problems to matters of global concern? Is the rate at which we are using up our natural resources unacceptable? Has the world's ecology entered a new phase with man's ability to manipulate the environment? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, or just probably, Rio can serve a purpose.

But three things are needed to prevent Rio from being merely a talking shop. The first is rigorous

control of the proceedings. Little will be gained if the talks degenerate into finger-pointing or haggling over aid. To be fruitful, this conference must stick to identifying environmental concerns which are common to all participants, and initiating moves to deal with the most urgent. There must also be realism, both about the dangers and the action they call for.

Developing countries

Second is a willingness by all participants to make sacrifices. Most of the world's environmental problems stem from excess. There must be a recognition that the benefits of environmental protection come at a price. This is obviously true for the industrial countries, but even developing countries must play a part.

The third point is that Rio will initiate a process rather than conclude one. It is essential that the politicians who put their names to the Rio conventions be held to the commitments they make, however flimsy. This will require the establishment of some kind of machinery to monitor progress and bring pressure to bear on the laggards.

An annual meeting of environmental ministers is one suggestion.

A sense of proportion is essential. Much can still be done by ceasing to pursue policies, such as energy subsidisation, that harm both the economy and the environment. Where conflicts between the two may exist, there is also much uncertainty. Yet it is naive to expect huge changes in social behaviour on the basis of uncertain scientific forecasts for the distant future. Rio could never have been more than a start.

This is not how idealists and environmentalists see it. They have already written off Rio. Others view it with a mixture of weariness and dread. Doubtless there will be moments over the next 12 days when stalemate and sheer verbiage will clog the mind. But Rio could create a watershed even if this fact does not appear staringly clear at the closing ceremony on June 16. At one level it should initiate action to deal with specific threats. But at another it should encourage the global consciousness, which will be needed to ease the stresses on the planet's resources.

Paying up for Maxwell victims

MORE THAN six months after Mr Robert Maxwell went missing from his yacht off the Canary Islands, pension scheme members in his business empire are still uncertain as to their future pension prospects. The government has shown little inclination to do more than pass the buck. The official bodies of the normally vociferous pensions lobby have maintained a studied silence. Banks who backed Mr Maxwell on his breakneck expansion in the 1980s persist in clinging, poker-faced, to stolen assets as security for their ill-judged loans. The debate over compensation for present and future pensioners has become bogged down in irrelevant detail.

This relegation of the pensioners' interests to a residual consideration in the winding up of the Maxwell finances is altogether unseemly. For while Mr Maxwell bears primary responsibility, the scandal is also the product of an overwhelming failure of the British system of pension provision.

So far the government has offered the Maxwell pensioners no more than the equivalent of the minimum pension under the state scheme. That is a derisory sum, which reflects the failure of successive governments to establish an adequate state pension plan in the 1960s and 1970s. If a third-best scheme was adopted by the last Labour government, it was largely on the basis that anything was better than continuing prevarication. Meantime the occupational pensions sector flourished, *faute de mieux*, with the support of substantial tax breaks.

More generous

A Maxwell-type scandal in Germany, France or even Italy would have been inconceivable precisely because greater security is provided by more generous state pension schemes. That is not to say that it is unreasonable for any government to tilt the balance further in the direction of the private sector. There may well be legitimate reasons, such as the impact of demography on public finances, to do so. But if politicians choose to go down that route, it is incumbent on them to provide a regulatory structure to compensate for the increased risk that legitimate pension expectations will be frustrated. This British politicians

have conspicuously failed to do.

The Wilson Committee, Professor Gower's review of investor protection, the City Capital Markets Committee, numerous press commentators - all, over the years, warned of the inadequacy of regulation and the need for legislation to protect pension fund beneficiaries. The response of the Department of Social Security and other interested Whitehall departments was supine. That insouciant attitude was reflected in the 1986 Financial Services Act, which confined itself purely to the narrower aspects of pensions investment management. Pensioners were, in effect, excluded from the compensation schemes set up under the new framework.

Collective responsibility

The regulatory debate now concentrates largely on the question of whether the Department of Trade and Industry was right to grant a licence to London and Bishopsgate International, the Maxwell fund management group, just before the 1986 Act took effect and the extent to which the fund management watchdog IMRO was at fault. These are important matters on which a forthcoming report from the Securities and Investments Board will no doubt throw light. But the real issue is Whitehall's collective responsibility for failing to introduce adequate regulation in the first place.

The government is understandably worried about setting a precedent with the Maxwell pensioners and other victims of theft or fraud. Yet a precedent has already been set at Barlow Clowes. The case of the Maxwell pensioners is invidious by comparison: most were coerced into their funds as a condition of employment.

The government might reasonably twist the arms of the pensions lobby, many of whose leaders opposed regulatory change, for a contribution via whatever form of compensation scheme finally emerges. Conscience money should also be extracted from the banks.

But it is for the government to take the initiative to make good the estimated £40m loss. It should get off the fence and make a firm commitment to compensate these victims of theft and fraud forthwith.

There is a tide in world financial and business affairs which normally flows from the western hemisphere to Europe, a little like the Gulf Stream: Americans invent an idea, popularise it, and some time later it washes up in plagiarised form on the shores of Britain, France and Germany.

In an unusual reversal of this phenomenon, the US is slowly warming to privatisation - the sale of state owned businesses to the private sector. It is doing so roughly a decade behind Britain and contemporaneously with the former east European satellites of the Soviet Union and the Third World regimes of Latin America.

To non-Americans, it may seem surprising that the US, the most capitalist economy of all, has any significant assets in public ownership.

Certainly, very little is owned by the Federal Government, apart from the post office, some regional electric power systems, the Amtrak railway and America's air traffic control network.

However, state and city governments own and operate a huge range of businesses in the utility and infrastructure sectors, including highways, bridges, tunnels, seaports, airports, power stations and water plants.

A few of these local governments, citing the successful example of Margaret Thatcher's privatisation drive in Britain, are now beginning to look at ways of selling existing enterprises, mostly to private corporations, but possibly in public share sales as well. They are also trying to get the private sector to finance the construction of new facilities such as toll roads.

This in turn is starting to create opportunities for bankers, financial advisers and corporate investors, be they US companies or European ones with privatisation experience.

The Reason Foundation, a Los Angeles-based think-tank which strongly supports privatisation, reckons that the US has some \$225bn of existing state and municipal enterprise which could potentially be spun off.

Privatisation on such a grand scale seems highly unlikely, due to a combination of political, legal and financial hurdles. However, President Bush gave the nascent movement a large nudge forward in April when he signed an executive order which removes some of the biggest financial and bureaucratic barriers to asset sales.

Why the sudden enthusiasm? The Republican White House, which has long paid lip service to privatisation as ideologically desirable, now views it as politically helpful too.

Mr Bush weighed down with a \$380bn federal budget deficit, has very limited scope for fiscal stimulus which would help spur recovery from recession in this presidential election year. The privatisation initiative is part of his re-election campaign effort to streamline or remove government regulations which hold back economic growth.

The small but vocal privatisation lobby argues that there are several powerful, longer-term reasons for selling off assets.

First, this could help alleviate America's serious infrastructure problems. Many of America's roads, bridges, and seaports are in serious decay - a fact underlined by the quarter of a billion gallons of water which flooded central Chicago in April when a tunnel collapsed. But the state and municipal authorities responsible for maintaining them lack the funds to do so.

The privatisation lobby argues

America's sale of the century

Privatisation is gaining momentum in state and city government, says Martin Dickson

that private investors would provide the necessary capital if ownership were transferred to them.

The weakness of this argument is that many investors will want to buy only assets in good condition, leaving local governments nursing those most in need of rehabilitation. Still, the money raised from the disposal of "good" assets could then be used by governments to rehabilitate "bad" ones.

Some of the money raised by privatisation might also be used by local governments to alleviate other serious problems, such as the plight of the predominantly black underclass in the inner cities. This argument is being pressed with particular vigour in the wake of last month's Los Angeles riots.

"It is a crime that state and local governments fiddle with billions of dollars in assets which could be used to rebuild cities - while the cities burn," says Mr John Granda, a privatisation expert with the legal firm of Skadden Arps.

The sale of state-owned enterprises is also the logical corollary of a fast-growing movement in the US to make government more efficient by adopting business practices similar to those of the private sector.

A poster of the movement include some of the most innovative state governors in the country, both Democratic and Republican: Mr Bill Clinton, the Democratic presidential nominee and Arkansas Governor; Mr William Weld, the Republican who is shaking up Massachusetts; Mr Lawton Chiles, the Democrat who is reshaping Florida's civil service; and Mrs Ann Richards, the Democrat running Texas.

Their bible is *Reinventing Government*, a book which has gone through seven printings since publication in February and, improbably for such a dry subject, spent eight weeks on the New York Times fiction best-seller list.

Its authors, Mr David Osborne and Mr Ted Gaebler, are consultants on public sector efficiency, who believe government in the US must be more "entrepreneurial" or businesslike if it is to overcome decades of accumulated bureaucratic inertia and financial waste.

Their solutions include privatisation.

Second, they have been contracting out services previously performed by the government - such as running prisons and collecting garbage - to private sector companies, a process which is also often termed "privatisation".

So far there is still far more talk than action. Political inertia or fear of opposition from public sector unions remains widespread, and relatively few politicians have begun seriously considering the outright sale of large assets.

But the cutting edge of the reform movement can be seen in Massachusetts, where the Republican Mr Weld took over as governor at the start of last year in a wave of revulsion

and votes against high-tax administrations; President Reagan's cuts in federal aid to state and local administrations during the 1980s; and recession, which has further eroded local governments' revenue base.

State and municipal politicians, desperate to balance their budgets, have been pursuing two main avenues of reform. First, they have been shaking up their existing civil service structures and control systems to improve performance.

Second, they have been contracting out services previously performed by the government - such as running prisons and collecting garbage - to private sector companies, a process which is also often termed "privatisation".

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and votes against the high tax regime of his predecessor, Mr Michael Dukakis, the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee.

Mr Weld's first budget slashed state spending, while his second proposed modest cuts in taxes at a time when most states have been raising theirs to cope with revenue shortfalls.

He has launched a war on bureaucratic red tape and begun contracting out government services, including parts of the hospital system, prisoners' healthcare, some roads' maintenance and parts of the vehicle registration system.

Mr Weld has also floated the idea of privatising two of the state's largest infrastructure assets - Boston's Logan airport, the ninth busiest in the US, and the Massachusetts Turnpike, a 135-mile toll road.

Studies have suggested that both could be sold - the airport for nearly \$800m and the road for about \$950m - but neither disposal is imminent, partly for local political reasons and partly because of the complexity of such a move.

In Massachusetts, as elsewhere, one factor holding back privatisa-

tion by voters against the high tax regime of his predecessor, Mr Michael Dukakis, the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee.

These new projects create opportunities beyond America's borders. European commercial and investment banks have much more experience of financing such ventures - be it providing loans or savings on debt and equity offerings.

S.G. Warburg, the British merchant bank which arranged public share offerings in both the Channel tunnel and the new Disney theme park in France, has, for example, been examining the possibilities of advising on US privatisations.

However, Warburg & Mr David Freud points out that the US project financing market has substantial differences from Europe. He cites, for example, "horrible" legal liability issues which could complicate US equity offerings.

In this, as in so many other aspects of privatisation, it seems the US may still have something to learn from Europe.

* *Reinventing Government*. David Osborne and Ted Gaebler. Addison Wesley \$22.95.

Samuel Brittan

Countries don't go broke

The former chairman of Citibank, Walter Wriston, was much scoffed at for saying: "Countries cannot go broke." So far as he was concerned the massive amounts of credit which the banks extended to Third World countries without proper examination, I have no wish to come to his aid. Governments can and do go broke. The view that they cannot is based on the false supposition that they can and do always raise in taxes what they need to service their debts.

Governments are, however, not countries. If the former Citibank chairman's remark is taken literally to apply to countries, it is correct. An organisation is bankrupt, broke or bust - call it what you will - if it cannot meet its debts.

Countries cannot go broke or surplus or declare profits simply because they are not that kind of entity. I would be astonished if any reader of this column - even if he works in the IMF - has ever lent to a country.

He may have written a submission about the desperate plight of Uruguay and argued eloquently for concessionary lending. But to whom have the cheques been written? For the kind of loan of which Mr Wriston was talking it would almost certainly have been a government, or a central bank.

I have been led to these musings by reflecting on the mundane subject of the British balance of payments and trying to work out what the ultimate differences are between those who see it as a problem and those who do not.

I want to go a little beyond the usual statistics and debating tricks on either side. Of course I noticed that those who gleefully wrung their hands in horror at the April

UK trade deficit were engaging in the usual short-term trick of going by one-month figures. Of course I noticed that if you look at the right number - that is non-official visible trade for the first four months of the year - then the deterioration is only some £1.6bn at an annual rate. The current account deficit so far this year is running at about 1 per cent of GDP, well within the margin of error - a margin skewed towards overstatement.

Of course I have been following Clifford Pratten's work which shows that the value of overseas investments is rising sufficiently to offset quite a substantial trade gap. Nor has the famous black hole either in the British or the world balance of payments yet disappeared.

Therefore, even if I am completely wrong and people like Wynne Godley of Cambridge are completely right in their view of the structural features of the "British economy", there is still no problem for macroeconomic policy.

The government still has several roles. It has some responsibility for the efficiency of the market mechanism. It has to look after its own solvency over several economic cycles. It is responsible for sustaining the value of the currency. At this level of argument it does so by maintaining the exchange rate against a non-inflationary block, successfully follows a domestic monetary target or uses some other technique, so long as it looks after its own balance and tightens or loosens monetary policy to minimise inflationary and deflationary disturbances.

Unfortunately many of those economists, who would naturally be making such points, are so consumed with hostility to fixed exchange rates, Europe, John Major or the ERM - depending on the exact form in whichever form they see the devil - that they use balance of payments figures for debating purposes and make common cause with those who would like a Gospal to take charge of all the nation's trade. If you believe that the state is a civil association which provides the framework for individuals and groups to carry out their own activities, then there is no room for a balance of payments, only a government budget and an inflation problem.

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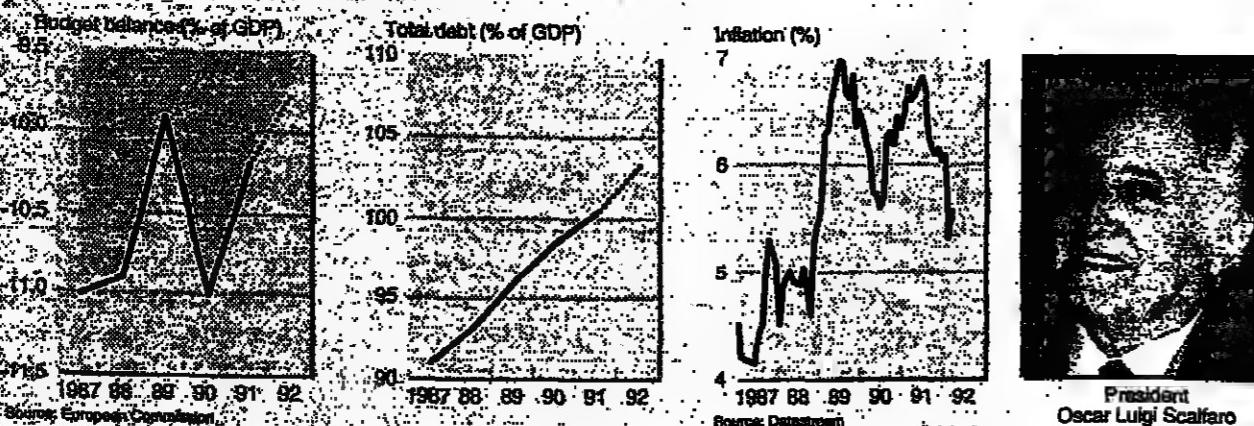
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Italy: an economy adrift

Italy's new president will seek urgent action, writes Robert Graham

Desire to heal political and moral wounds

The cartoonists have lost no time in poking fun at Mr Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, Italy's new president, picking on his publicly professed Catholic faith and his authoritarian manner. The 73-year-old head of state was being depicted as an Ayatollah, within 24 hours of his inauguration last week.

The humour of the cartoonists has brought into sharp relief the personality of the new president, and the mood of Italy. The country is crying out for leadership - both political and moral. Mr Scalfaro, within the limits of his presidential power, wants to provide it.

The political parties wasted the whole of 1991 rehearsing for general elections, which in the end were held this April. A large protest vote further fragmented the political parties and rendered unworkable an already discredited system of coalition government.

The difficulties of forming a new government risk leaving Italy rudderless - precisely when decisions are most needed. The deteriorating state of the country's public finances demands urgent and unpopular corrective measures. Otherwise, as Mr Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, governor of the Bank of Italy, pointed out over the weekend, the Italian economy will never meet the minimum requirements for economic convergence with its European Community partners.

In the past three months, a moral dimension has also emerged on two fronts. Continuous revelations in the municipal corruption scandal in Milan have singed a nation seemingly immune to tales of pork-barrel politics. Magistrates are uncovering a sophisticated cover-up of commissions on public contracts among all the main political parties, including the self-proclaimed "clean" anti-Communist party of the democratic left (PDS).

Mr Scalfaro partly owes his compromise candidature for the presidency, for his being seen as a figure untainted by corruption.

The parties are seen as the prime culprits for encouraging an abuse of political patronage

The second front is organised crime. The brutal Mafia assassination of Mr Giovanni Falcone, Italy's leading anti-Mafia magistrate, nine days ago, was a direct challenge to the state. It was not just the manner of the killing - blowing up his three-car convoy near Palermo with a ton of explosives. Mr Falcone was the most heavily guarded official, and symbolised the fight against organised crime, which is more powerful today than at any time since the Second World War. At least part of the explanation for the Mafia's survival is seen in the way politicians have been willing to use organised crime and vice versa to their mutual benefit.

Against this bleak backdrop, Mr Scalfaro could prove the benign Ayatollah and promote

change. On his

inauguration, he took the unprecedented step of "inviting" parliament to form a commission to study proposals for an urgent overhaul of the constitution. He also told the military a large parade in Rome next weekend was inappropriate. The parade has been cancelled, even though the review stands even though the figures showed

when the parties are so weak. Before the general elections, the main political parties would be formed by a continuation of the Christian Democrat-Socialist alliance, which had kept the Communists at bay for years. These two parties, with their minor allies, the Liberals and Social Democrats, planned to continue their carve-up of power with Mr Bettino Craxi, the Socialist leader, as prime minister, and probably Mr Giulio Andreotti, the outgoing premier, being rewarded with the presidency. The poor showing of the Christian Democrats and the Socialists in the elections and the prospect of the outgoing four-party coalition forming the next government. Although the coalition retains

a narrow majority in parliament, it lacks the credibility to govern on its own, and its leaders' reputations have been damaged by the failure to bring the economy into line with the agreed Maastricht terms.

On the central criteria of inflation levels, interest rates, debt and public sector deficit, the Italian performance is increasingly distant from that of its main EC partners. The public sector deficit is more than 10.5 per cent of gross domestic product, debt is close to 105 per cent of GDP, and retail price inflation is an annual 5.8 per cent. The 1992 budget is so overspent and underfunded that the EC has proposed the rapid introduction of an austerity package. The budget is heading for a deficit of at least L165,000bn (£24.6bn) instead of the L128,000bn agreed with the EC.

The politicians no longer have the excuse of an electoral timetable to duck action. The plights of the economy could well dictate the formation of a "technical" government, with the limited task of economic stabilisation and introducing political reforms to alter the unworkable system of proportional representation. President Scalfaro is likely to stake his reputation on persuading the politicians to agree as soon as possible.

This week may provide further clues as to how Mr Scalfaro sees his role, when he begins consultations to form a new government. Traditionally, the head of state's right to invite someone to form a government has been treated as a formality. The real power lies with the parliamentary parties, who have put the president in his job anyway.

However, this does not preclude the president from knocking heads together or acting as an arbiter. Mr Scalfaro's long parliamentary experience, combined with his credentials as an independent-minded Christian Democrat, backed by the second largest party, the PDS, permit him the role of referee - especially

as he took the lead in the negotiations.

Given the combination of the family name and the backing of Barclays, it might seem that Durlacher is getting the Liffe chairmanship, rather than Jack Wigglesworth, for example, just because it's turn. Not so, says his fans pointing to his hard work in areas such as compliance.

Even so, when Liffe chief executive Michael Jenkins retires later this year - after an accomplished decade at the top - it is important that he is replaced from outside.

Futures are an arcane but by no means impenetrable subject - a head for deltas and stop-losses is not really such a rare commodity as the combination of management and marketing skill needed if Liffe is to enjoy an equally prosperous second decade.

OBSERVER

For whom the poll tells

Although she'd probably prefer not to know it, Margaret Thatcher now stands on a par with Karl Marx. Or so say the Russians lately polled by their country's Centre for the Study of Public Opinion.

Mind you, neither of the two ranks very high in the Russians' list of the world's greatest figures. They tie for 15th place in a league still headed by Lenin even though the proportion of people nominating him is down from 67 per cent last year to only 43. The only foreigner in the top ten is Albert Einstein.

The Centre's sociologist Leonid Sedov says most indicators show worsening chauvinistic attitudes among the various ethnic groups in the former Soviet Union.

The Russians' greatest dislikes are for the peoples of the Caucasus; then come Jews and Chechens; followed by Central Asians, the Baltic peoples and finally the Ukrainians and Belarusians.

The attitudes of other groups to the Russians vary widely. Whereas Central Asians think them cultured and clever, for instance, the Baltic peoples regard them as the opposite. In Sedov's view, while the feared force of Russian nationalism is growing, it is still relatively mild. External onlookers, however, may have qualms about the rising popularity of Stalin. With a gain from 15 to 22 per cent over the past year, he now stands third in the ranking.

Price puzzle

Expatriates working for distant multinationals might do well to check which of the estimates, if either, reflects reality?

A check on one such survey, just published by the Geneva-based Corporate Resources Group, shows some marked differences from similar studies done by other organisations. Take for instance the CRC cost indices as compared with those



parent of the Hongkong Bank, and this week David Li, a somewhat younger member of the colony's movers and shakers club, steps onto the board of Chelsfield, Elliott Bernard's privately-owned property company. Both men are wealthy, interested in property, and have strong British ties.

David Li, the 51-year-old chief executive of Hong Kong's Bank of East Asia, and 47-year-old Bernard go back a long way. Bernard attended Li's 50th birthday party and Li bought a bit of Bernard's Wentworth golf course and his bank co-managed a private placement of Chelsfield's shares.

If Bernard is to stand a chance of making a decent stock market debut later this year - and his PR machine seems to be in top gear - he needs more independent names than just Li's on his letterhead. The sight of a wealthy banker going onto the board of a company that his bank does business with, is not always the best buy signal. The potential conflicts of interest have to be set against the value of the business connections.

By contrast, now that Li Ka-Shing has severed his ties with the Hong Kong Bank, he is far less restricted in what he can do especially when it involves the bank's troubled private clients.

New blues

Amended version of Al Jolson hit of the 1930s, performed in the weekend sing-along at the Barley Mow, overlooking Canary Wharf:

*Once I built a tower to the sun,
Steel and glass all sublime.
Once I built a tower, now it's done.
Buddy, can you spare a dime?*

Old cronies

Which of the following boardroom moves is the more important for Britain's depressed property market? Last week Li Ka-Shing resigned from HSBC Holdings,

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL

Fax 071 873 5938. Letters transmitted should be clearly typed and not hand written. Please see fax for finest resolution

Reality of industry hidden

From Mr Roger Lyons.

Sir, May I echo every word of Leon di Marco's letter (May 20) about the government's blindness to the perilous state of Britain's manufacturing industry. But may I warn that we still face a flood of misleading government propaganda in its endeavours to paint a sympathetic picture of manufacturing industry, the role of the Bruges Group. As he says, that support implies a willingness to accept some some abrogation of national sovereignty in exchange for measures that are demonstrably necessary for effective functioning of the single market.

At MSF's conference in Bournemouth on May 16, a resolution was passed reaffirming our membership's belief that Britain needs "a thriving, expanding and competitive manufacturing industry as the key sector of the economy on whose success all else ultimately depends". We know that a major change is needed in government industrial strategy if this is to happen.

To put pressure on the government we need to open up the debate. That cannot be done if the truth about the state of manufacturing is hidden from public view. It is up to papers like the FT diligently to examine the reality of what is happening.

On the same day Mr Di Marco's letter was published the current account deficit went over £1bn again. Yet in the last few months we have had regular statements from ministers (and, indeed, the CBI) telling us that the figures showed

Changes to EC constitution not necessary for single market

From Dr Brian Hindley.

Sir, Mr Sutherland's comments (Personal View, May 20) about the government's blindness to the perilous state of Britain's manufacturing industry. But may I warn that we still face a flood of misleading government propaganda in its endeavours to paint a sympathetic picture of manufacturing industry, the role of the Bruges Group. As he says, that support implies a willingness to accept some some abrogation of national sovereignty in exchange for measures that are demonstrably necessary for effective functioning of the single market.

But that concession, for that purpose, does not remove the possibility of objecting to abrogations of sovereignty for other purposes. "It is unreasonable to argue against regulation from Brussels," Mr Sutherland says, "particularly when the effect of the regulation is to dismantle protection." What nonsense. Having accepted the principle of the single market, it is unreasonable to argue against regulations that are necessary to put into practice. Any other regulation is necessary to avoid one?

The changes in the EC constitution proposed at Maastricht are not necessary for the single market. Nor are various current proposals of the Commission - for example, the Euro soap opera planned by the directorate-general for information and culture (DG-X). New justification is needed for such measures. Proponents of a "deeper" Communi-

nity have failed to provide one, as is suggested by Mr Sutherland's attempt to deduce general consent to EC federalism from consent to the single market, and by his ritualistic reference to the Second World War. Few want another war between France and Germany. But what line of reasoning implies that a deeper Community is necessary to avoid one?

The single market is not a central issue in current debate about the structure of the EC. Those who advocate a deepened Community could move the debate forward by providing a reasoned case for their views.

Brian Hindley,
London School of Economics,
Houghton Street,
London WC2A 2AE

encouraging trends in exports and imports.

MSF is determined that the silence about the plight of Britain's manufacturing industry is ended. Our members - in manufacturing and the services - depend on a highly skilled, properly rewarded, scientifically backed industry which can put Britain back into the lead again.

Roger Lyons,
general secretary elect,
MSF,
Park House,
64-66 Wandsworth Common,
North Side, London SW13 2SH

Caught out

From R A Delaforce.

Sir, Jurek Martin's comment ("Theeere's Johnny", May 23) about cricket being played only in the old British Empire and Holland is surprising. May I add that cricket is played in many "overseas" countries, including the US, South America (Argentina, Brazil) and Europe (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece - Corfu, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, and Spain) as well as in the Channel Islands, Gibraltar and Malta.

In fact, certain of these countries will be participating in a European Cricket Cup competition to be held in England in July this year.

In Portugal cricket has been played since the 1850s with the first match between the British Clubs in Oporto and Lisbon being held in 1861, making this annual event one of the oldest in cricket on the continent of Europe.

R A Delaforce,
Rua do Campo Alegre, 486-3
4100 Oporto,
Portugal

Deregulation the culprit for parlous state of US airline industry

From Mr Doug Henwood.

Sir, Reading Nikki Tait's piece on the financial wreck that is the US airline industry ("Spectre of losses dogs US carriers", May 26) I was struck again by the almost universal inability to draw what should be an obvious conclusion: our 14-year experiment with deregulation has been a total disaster.

American Airlines chairman, Bob Crandall, says his industry "is going down the tubes". One-fifth of domestic airline passengers are now being carried by bankrupt airlines. Venetian names have either disappeared (Pan Am, Eastern) or

are at risk of disappearing (TWA).

How can this be? Unions have been broken and real wages cut. Oil prices, despite recent increases, have been well behaved for years and, in real dollars, are well below what they were when the industry was deregulated. On domestic routes, there's no such thing as foreign competition. The surviving airlines, Crandall's prominent among them, are models of tight management. The answer has to be deregulation; what else is there?

Partisans of deregulation point to lower fares as the

strategy's triumph. Yes, real fares per seat mile have declined since 1978 - but at pretty much the same pace as they did in the prior 20 years. And here's a fact that deregulators never confront: the air fare component of the consumer price index has risen at twice the pace of general inflation since fare-setting was turned over to the invisible hand. The culprit, of course, are the hidden price increases of longer flights (thanks to the hub-and-spoke system) and tighter purchase restrictions.

The volatility of the airline business is a function of several things, among them high costs of entry and a huge overhang of empty seats. That leads to contradictory pressures of oligopoly and price warfare. Regulation aimed to stabilise these pressures: deregulation has exposed them in rich detail.

Europeans should know this as they move to deregulate their own skies. Unfortunately, these truths are rarely expressed in our own press, much less yours.

Doug Henwood,
editor/publisher,
Left Business Observer,
260W 35 Street,
New York,
NY 10001, US

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FINANCIAL TIMES

Monday June 1 1992

German defence minister criticised for wanting to abandon project Bonn delays Euro-fighter decision

By Quentin Peel in Bonn

SUPPORTERS of the £21bn European Fighter Aircraft (EFA) project within the German government have won a one-month delay in the final decision on whether to pull out of the deal.

Postponement of a key parliamentary meeting this week will give Mr John Major, the British prime minister, a chance to persuade Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the German leader, not to abandon Britain, Italy and Spain in the joint production of the aircraft. The two meet for an informal summit in Bonn on Friday.

Mr Volker Rühe, the new German defence minister, is known to be highly sceptical about going ahead with such a sophisticated fly-by-wire fighter when his budget is under severe pressure. He

has called for drastic price cuts if the aircraft is to be financed within the DM12bn (£4bn) set aside in his long-term budget.

The chances of ensuring German participation still look exceedingly slim. Most politicians in Bonn doubt the project can win majority support in the German parliament because of the present climate of budget stringency to finance unification.

A final meeting takes place today of the six-member working group of defence experts drawn from the German coalition government, which includes the Christian Democrats (CDU), the Christian Social Union (CSU) and the Free Democrats (FDP).

It will produce a report comparing all possible alternatives to EFA, such as the US F-16 and F-18 fighters, the Swedish Gripen,

and the Russian MiG-29, but making no rigid recommendation.

The key meeting of CDU and CSU parliamentarians, scheduled for tomorrow, at which Mr Rühe was due to make his own recommendation, has been postponed until June 16.

The deadline for a final decision is now July 1, when the 1993 draft budget has to be presented to the German cabinet.

The delay was agreed last week at a meeting of leaders of the CDU and CSU chaired by Mr Kohl, and involving Mr Rühe, Mr Theo Waigel, the CSU leader and finance minister, and Mr Max Streibl, the Bavarian prime minister.

The EFA project is supposed to move from its present development phase to the pre-production phase next year. The issue has been brought to a head early in Germany by the need to include DM100m in next year's budget for the pre-production phase.

According to reports of the meeting, Mr Rühe was attacked sharply by the CSU leaders for letting it be known that he wants to abandon the project. They argued that such a decision would undermine Germany's international credibility, and deal a devastating blow to the country's aerospace industry.

Mr Kohl agreed to put off this week's meeting, giving himself a chance to discuss the project with Mr Major, and by telephone with Mr Felipe Gonzalez, the Spanish prime minister.

The EFA project is supposed to move from its present development phase to the pre-production phase next year. The issue has been brought to a head early in Germany by the need to include DM100m in next year's budget for the pre-production phase.



Despite the peaceful symbols some demonstrators threw red paint at yesterday's ceremony
Bomber Command statue unveiled amid protests

POLICE in London yesterday arrested nine protesters at the dedication ceremony of a statue of Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris, the RAF chief responsible for the blanket bombing campaign over German cities in the second world war.

The arrests followed the unveiling of the statue by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, who was interrupted and heckled during a speech honouring Sir Arthur and the 55,000 allied Bomber Command airmen killed in action.

Scuffles broke out as protesters standing in a crowd of wartime veterans shouted "Harris was a mass murderer".

In her speech the Queen Mother, who was Queen during the war years, said Sir Arthur was an "inspiring leader" and the bombing crews had "given us the war and the means of salvation" during the second world war.

But she urged: "Let us remember, too, all those of every nation and background who suffered as victims of the second world war."

The unveiling took place on the 50th anniversary of a raid by 1,000 British bombers which devastated Cologne. Civic leaders in Cologne and Dresden held ceremonies to remember the civilian victims of Bomber Command.

In Pforzheim, Mayor Joachim Becker said: "A united Europe... deserves symbols other than a tribute to the man responsible for the deaths of 20,000 citizens of this city when British airplanes senselessly reduced Pforzheim to rubble on February 24, 1945."

Many demonstrators expressed shame about Serbia's role in the war. The protesters carried signs saying "God does not forgive the sin of murder" and "In memory to those killed in Bosnia". These were in stark contrast to the election banners of the ruling Socialists which warned "We don't bargain with the dignity of our fatherland" and "We have faith in our citizens".

Most of the marchers, which made up Belgrade's social elite, feared that the United Nations sanctions were only a prelude to military intervention. Mr Milan Nikolic, an opposition politician, said: "Sanctions are better than military intervention. But I am afraid this is just a step towards intervention. The main victims of the sanctions will be those who are already against Milosevic. Military intervention would strengthen Milosevic by causing the automatic homogenisation of Serbs in defence of Serbia."

Ms Sanja Sanaider, a tourist agent, explained: "My profession is obviously the hardest hit. But sanctions on the whole will punish the average person, the working class will bear the burden."

"It will not destroy those in power. They won't even feel it. It may even strengthen their hold."

Behind the solemn procession and the pride that Belgrade has finally taken a stand against the violence, loomed the belief that the death and destruction will soon engulf Belgrade. "In the back of everyone's mind is the fear that the war might spread here," said Mr Veivoda.

Mr Goran Jovanovic, a student at Belgrade University, said: "I came here to show support for Bosnia. We are also here to destroy the regime, but we don't know how."

Mrs Gorica Vukotic said: "I am scared for my children. We asked my relatives in the countryside to start storing cooking oil, which you can't find anyway, vegetables and canned foods. The sanctions will only speed up the collapse. It is just a question of time before the violence ends up in Belgrade."

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give a firm vote of confidence in the area.

The government also intends to maximise its leverage in negotiations by offering to take substantial quantities of space.

Some senior civil servants are even urging the examination of the option of buying freeholds from distressed Docklands property companies, arguing that the crisis has produced a "once-in-50 years" opportunity to buy quality property at knock-down prices.

Furthermore, reports that the government is taking a tough stance on the obligation of any private investor to honour O&Y's commitment to put £120m towards the proposed Jubilee line extension to London Underground were being qualified yesterday.

The initial requirement is for £100m, payable in three tranches over a number of years, and the rest over the long term using a formula based on rent income. Details of the behind-the-scenes discussions emerged as Hanson, the acquisitive industrial conglomerate, and P&O, the transport company, confirmed their interest in the future of the multi-billion pound development.

At the same time, the opposition Labour party stepped up its demands for an emergency Commons statement on the future of Canary Wharf that went into administration owing banks £1.2bn.

Officials continue to insist there will be no bail-out of Canary Wharf, but one minister confirmed that the aim was to

Canary Wharf job moves plan

By Ivo Dawnyay
and John Authors

THE UK government held talks with three developers, including Olympia & York, on terms for a substantial shift of its administrative workforce to London's Docklands even before O&Y's Canary Wharf went into administration last week, it emerged yesterday.

The relocation of up to 5,000 workers from several departments will be top of the agenda when senior ministers meet in Downing Street today under the chairmanship of Lord Wakeham, leader of the House of Lords.

Officials continue to insist there will be no bail-out of Canary Wharf, but one minister confirmed that the aim was to

give a firm vote of confidence in the area.

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Some senior civil servants are even urging the examination of the option of buying freeholds from distressed Docklands property companies, arguing that the crisis has produced a "once-in-50 years" opportunity to buy quality property at knock-down prices.

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John Mowlem Construction plc

FINANCIAL TIMES COMPANIES & MARKETS

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INSIDE

Link with Maxwell empire weakened

Mirror Group Newspapers has appointed Rowe & Pitman, part of the SG Warburg group, as its lead broker in place of Smith New Court ahead of a planned re-listing of the newspaper group on the London Stock Exchange. The appointment weakens a link with the newspaper empire of the late Robert Maxwell (above) which went back to Smith's involvement in MGN's £245m (\$440m) flotation in May 1991. Page 16

Wytch Farm stake for sale

The 17.5 per cent stake in the UK Wytch Farm oil field owned by Atlantic Richfield, the US oil group, is to be sold. It could fetch £200m (\$360m). Page 16

Banesto may resolve dispute

An attack by British Petroleum on the accounts of one of Spain's biggest banks, Banesto, failed to materialise at a shareholders meeting in Madrid on Saturday, leading to speculation that a row between the two would soon be resolved. Page 16

Ferruzzi down

Ferruzzi Finanziaria, the holding company for Italy's second biggest private-sector industrial group, suffered a sharp drop in net attributable profits for 1991. The decline stems from a mix of heavy debt costs, ambitious investments, and the non-recurrence of the extraordinary items which enhanced earnings in 1990. Page 17

Weak demand hits steelmakers

Japan's five largest steelmakers reported lower pre-tax profits for fiscal 1991 because of weak demand and higher production costs. They expect a further decline in earnings this year. Page 17

Danmarks issue FRNs

Den Danske Bank, Denmark's biggest bank, has launched an international offering of subordinated floating-rate notes. Page 18

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IN the recent House of Commons debate on the Maastricht Treaties, Mr Norman Lamont, the chancellor, rightly underlined that the issues of European economic and monetary union had been more fully debated in Britain than in any other EC member state.

But questions concerning the constitution and responsibilities of the Bank of England as the EC moves towards EMU have so far been given no attention at all.

This is a gap in the public debate about Britain's economic future that deserves to be filled soon. Not only are complex issues involved, but timely factors are coming to the fore. In particular, the term of office of Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton, the present Bank governor, expires at the end of June next year. Whoever takes over from him for what can be expected to be a five-year term will head the Bank through what may be its biggest changes since nationalisation in the 1940s.

The Bank's status merits discussion for two reasons. One is a global trend towards making central banks primarily responsible for combating inflation and giving them independence from government to achieve price stability. If the Bank of England retains its current status, it will increasingly be an odd man out among the world's central banks.

The other is the Maastricht Treaty itself, which alongside a single currency envisages the creation of a European System of Central Banks made up of an independent European central bank and the central banks of the EC member states.

The government's position - frequently articulated by Mr Lamont - is that responsibility for economic policy, including the setting of interest rates, should, as now, stay unambiguously in national hands during the preparatory second stage of EMU which

Time to have a debate on Emu and the Bank

begins in 1994. As long as this state exists, the chancellor has not given its independence, otherwise there would be no way of making the conduct of monetary policy accountable to parliament.

But it is inconceivable that the Bank can stay as it is if government and parliament eventually decide to join the third and final stage of union

Economics Notebook

By Peter Norman

in 1997, when a majority of EC members will be able to decide whether to go ahead with a single European currency and European central bank, or in 1999 when a few as two states can create the union. If Britain decides to be a full member of EMU, the Bank of England will also have to be independent.

The timetable agreed at Maastricht means the UK government and parliament will have to debate whether to move to the third and final stage of EMU before the end of 1996. This is likely to be during the life of the present parliament. Even if the decision goes against joining the third stage of EMU, 1996 would be an occasion for a debate, or even decisions, on the constitution and responsibilities of the Bank of England.

A number of thorny issues that cannot wait until 1997 or 1998 are already surfacing. Some are technical, such as the role that the Bank will play in

for monetary policy, even as part of a European system of central banks, it would have to restructure its decision-making organs and their accountability.

The Bank Court, which includes industrialists, City financiers and trade unionists as well as Bank officials, clearly could not decide on interest rates because several of its members would be exposed to a potential conflict of interest.

If such decisions were to be taken by a new group comprising Bank officials, operating most likely with a one-person, one-vote system, the individual concerned would have greatly increased power, raising questions as to whom they should be accountable and how.

Also, who would they represent? Britain, as a unitary state, is peculiarly ill-placed to inject regional interests and influences into its bureaucracies. In contrast to the Bundesbank council or the US Federal Open Market Committee, which give the representatives of the US and German regions a say in monetary policy making, there would be no easy way of reflecting the preoccupations of Scotland, Wales, the west Midlands or the north of England in the decision-making centre of the Bank of England.

The role of the Bank would have to be clearly defined if it became independent. Would it concentrate on securing price stability, like the Bundesbank? Or would it retain the responsibility for the welfare of the City and industry or bank supervision that the Bank has today?

What should be the decision-making body if the Bank assumes responsibility for setting interest rates, either in the context of a European central banking system or as an independent entity?

At present, interest rate decisions are taken by the chancellor after talks between the Bank and the Treasury. But if the Bank became responsible

Dowty moves to shore up bid defence

By Richard Gourley in London

DOWTY Group, the UK aerospace and information technology group, could this week bolster its defence against the hostile £49m bid from TI, the specialist engineering company, with the help of payments on a cancelled UK Ministry of Defence contract.

Dowty could take a £2m-£4m cancellation payment as an exceptional item in the year to March, increasing the estimated profit by at least 10 per cent to more than £32m.

This would lift the Cheltenham-based group's apparent recovery from the downturn in the aerospace market and its involvement in the information technology industry.

Dowty is also likely to bring forward, from June 16, its audited preliminary results. Publishing these results before TI's bid closes on June 10 would allow shareholders to estimate 1993 profits.

These are just some of the questions that have to be answered if the UK finally decides to join EMU. The problem is that they are so wide-ranging that they could not be tackled at the last minute.

Indeed, it may be that Britain will not become a full member of EMU. But the implications of EMU for the Bank of England should be considered in depth and in advance, lest the Bank be pitched into a new environment completely unprepared and with a constitution that does not do justice to the importance of monetary policy for the UK's economic welfare.

O&Y of C\$3.1bn.

But treatment of their O&Y loans, and the impact on their earnings, has differed widely.

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the ailing developer's biggest creditor, has taken a special charge of C\$1bn, which includes the bulk of its exposure.

As a result, CIBC suffered a C\$440m loss for the quarter.

On the other hand, Bank of Montreal, which says its loans to O&Y are all secured by cash-generating buildings or marketable

securities, has left its estimate of loan losses unchanged for fiscal 1992. Like RBC, Bank of Nova Scotia cushioned the O&Y blow by reversing Third World write-downs as a result of the recent appreciation in their value.

Bank of Montreal and Bank of

Smith Corona quits PC venture

By Martin Dickson in New York

SMITH Corona, the US manufacturer of typewriters and word processors, is pulling out of the fiercely competitive personal computer market little more than a year after it entered the sector through a joint venture with Acer, the large Taiwanese company.

Smith Corona, which is 48 per cent owned by Hanson, the UK conglomerate, said the joint venture would be terminated at the end of next month.

Smith Corona, which has been building PCs under the joint venture agreement, will continue to do so for a short period but manufacturing will eventually be transferred to Acer's plants. Acer said it would also continue developing products based on the joint venture's technology, with royalty payments to Smith Corona.

Mr Lee Thompson, Smith Corona's chairman, said the company had been breaking even on the venture but intense price competition in the PC market meant there was little profit opportunity.

When the joint venture launched its first products in March last year, Mr Thompson said he hoped that one third of Smith Corona's sales would come from personal computers in three to five years. But he said yesterday that "a third of revenues doesn't mean anything if you don't get about a third of profit".

Competition in the PC market was extremely fierce even when Smith Corona entered the field and it has grown much more cut-throat over the past 12 months.

The company's core market of typing and word processing equipment for the home and small business has also been depressed for the past two years, and Smith Corona reported net income virtually halved, at \$17.3m, in the first nine months of the financial year.

Mr Thompson said the financial effect of the joint venture termination on Smith Corona was expected to be immaterial.

Analysts have often questioned whether Smith Corona's core market faces erosion in the face of cut-price PCs aimed at the home.

However, Mr Thompson said yesterday that the company was getting more and more confirmation that the typewriter and word processor market was quite distinct from PCs.



Sir Alistair Frame (right) with John Robb: 'It's incredibly important to raise marketing skills.'

Robb. "We are looking for a partner, particularly in Europe. Two or three are left on the short-list."

He plays down another possible threat - that to Retrovir. Wellcome's anti-Aids drug. He argues analysts at one stage became fixated by Retrovir, seeing the group merely in relation to Aids, although both are still in clinical trials. Timing will be crucial. SmithKline Beecham, which Mr Robb acknowledges has an excellent marketing track-record is scheduled to launch a competitor drug, Famiclovir, in 1995.

The other element of Mr Robb's defence strategy is to sell Zovirax without a doctor's prescription in chemists. "We don't have the marketing clout to exploit Zovirax in the OTC [over-the-counter] market on our own," admits Mr Robb. "The beneficial effects of

zovirax in North Carolina. If Wellcome loses it plans to appeal, but Barr would probably be able to market a generic version of the drug in the meanwhile.

In spite of the problems facing the group, Mr Robb is confident he can deliver the targets he has promised. These include underlying sales growth in excess of 10 per cent, an operating margin of 30 per cent by 1996 and earnings-per-share growth of more than 15 per cent a year.

Competition to Retrovir from new drugs is unlikely to make much impact in the medium term, reckons Mr Robb. "Our view is that Aids will continue to be treated with Retrovir in combination with other therapies at least for the next five years. The market is growing and the competition is more noise than anything else at the moment."

Concern does exist about a challenge to Retrovir's US patent, however. The patent's validity is being challenged by Barr Laboratories, a US group. The outcome of the case is unclear, since it will be decided next year by a

jury in North Carolina. If Wellcome loses it plans to appeal, but Barr would probably be able to market a generic version of the drug in the meanwhile.

"Marketing is terribly important. We have a great reputation in research and development, but not a comparable reputation in marketing," he says. "We used to think if we got the research and development right the products would sell themselves."

He plans to improve marketing by expanding Wellcome's sales force. He has also hired new sales managers for the US and Japan. Elsewhere he will continue his strategy of co-marketing with other companies.

"It's incredibly important to raise our marketing skills to the same level as our research and development skills," says Mr Robb. "If we don't we'll be in trouble."

As he launches a world-wide marketing campaign on Thursday, his most immediate challenge is to make sure the flotation itself does not run into trouble. With as much as £44m at stake, his much-vaunted marketing skills will be in demand.

Those drugs that are fully developed will be launched in all possible markets to justify the money invested in them - it

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At the bid enters its closing stages, advisers from both sides are stepping up presentations to institutional investors. Dowty says it made mistakes, including the disastrous move into information technology, but has stripped out a lot of costs and refocused.

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COMPANIES AND FINANCE

Arco's 17.5% Wytch Farm stake up for sale

By Steve Thompson

THE 17.5 per cent stake in the Wytch Farm oil field owned by Atlantic Richfield (Arco), the US oil group, is to be offered for sale.

It could fetch between £150m and £200m according to oil analysts.

Dorset-based Wytch Farm is the UK's largest onshore oil field, producing around 60,000 barrels of oil a day.

The sale of the Arco stake will be carried out by Morgan Grenfell, the merchant bank.

Other stakes in Wytch Farm are held by BP (50 per cent), Premier Consolidated (12.5 per cent), Clyde Petroleum (7.5 per cent) and Purbeck Petroleum (7.5 per cent).

Purbeck Petroleum was set up by a syndicate of banks last year to manage some of the assets of Kelt Energy, the oil group which ran into severe problems in financing its debts.

Kelt is believed to have turned down a bid of £80m for its 7.5 per cent

stake in Wytch Farm in 1991. Arco inherited its 17.5 per cent stake in Wytch Farm following its takeover of Tricentrol in 1988, during a period of intense takeover activity in the UK oil industry.

Arco had originally targeted Britoil, but lost out in the battle for control of the latter to BP.

There was speculation yesterday that British Gas may be interested in acquiring Arco's Wytch Farm stake. British Gas discovered Wytch Farm in partnership with BP, with each holding a 50 per cent stake in the oil field.

However, British Gas was forced by the Government to sell its holding in the late 1980s.

Arco is also putting up for sale other of its European oil and gas assets, including its interests in the Amethyst and "V" fields in the North Sea.

The US group is embarking on a plan to reduce its capital spending by 20 per cent over the next five years.

The stake is effectively

By Richard Gourlay

MIRROR GROUP Newspapers has appointed Rowe & Pitman, part of the SG Warburg group, as its lead broker in place of Smith New Court ahead of a planned re-listing of the newspaper group on the London Stock Exchange later this month.

The appointment, which was confirmed yesterday, weakens a link with the newspaper empire of the late Robert Maxwell that went back to Smith's involvement in MGN's £245m flotation in May 1981.

Sir Michael Richardson, the chairman of Smith New Court, whose close personal contacts with Mr Maxwell brought the business to Smiths is also vice-chairman of Rothschild, the merchant bank advising the Maxwell family in negotiations with its bankers.

Smith New Court was asked to remain as a joint broker but MGN wanted a fresh start with new advisers.

MGN was suspended in December at 125p, leaving administrators to Mr Maxwell's private interests with a controlling 51 per cent stake in the newspaper group.

The stake is effectively



Mr Robert Maxwell, the late chairman of Mirror Group Newspapers.

source said. Their first task will be to protect shareholders from a potential share price collapse on re-listing, given that at least £150m stolen from Mirror pension funds will have to be replaced and £100m is missing from the company.

In the next three weeks MGN's preliminary accounts for 1991, an annual report and re-listing particulars will be prepared.

Advisers will then begin the not in substantial task of convincing existing shareholders that MGN is strong enough to attempt to trade out of its problems.

Mr John Talbot, the administrator of Mr Robert Maxwell's private interests, said in January that there would be no early sale of the stake and that consideration would be given to a sale "when comprehensive information is available from the board".

Shortly thereafter three groups independently ruled out buying MGN. They were Mercury Asset Management, the venture capital arm of SG Warburg, Pearson, publisher of the Financial Times and Mr Tiny Rowland's Lonrho group, publisher of The Observer. See Lex

"Advisers are now looking at nuremberg crisis management for the next phase of bringing MGN to re-listing," a MGN

Greece Fund board to amend structure

THE BOARD of Greece Fund, a closed-end investment company listed on the London Stock Exchange, is proposing to amend the fund's structure following complaints that the shares were trading at a large discount to net asset value and were illiquid, writes Sara Webb.

The board will seek shareholder approval for the Greece Fund - managed by Schroder Investment Management - to be turned into an open-ended investment company, and will allow investors to redeem their shares at the net asset value.

The fund's board has agreed to allow limited redemption of the shares. "In view of the fact that trading on the Athens stock exchange is still relatively illiquid by international standards, the board believes it

necessary at this stage for the redemption right to be restricted - to once each quarter", it said in a statement.

Up to 25 per cent of the issued shares can be redeemed in the quarter after the new proposals are implemented, and a further 5 per cent of the shares may be redeemed in each subsequent quarter.

Schroder Investment Management said that it was unclear whether the fund would be allowed to retain its London listing once it became an open-ended fund. However, the fund is seeking an alternative listing on the Irish Stock Exchange in case it is forced to give up its London listing.

The board said it would move the central management and control of the Greece Fund from the UK to Jersey.

Orders in the new, larger

factory has increased by 30 per cent since October.

Mr Saphir said, although there

was still about 50 per cent

spare capacity.

During the year, Hunter sold

two businesses - Butterkist,

the coffee popcorn producer,

and Matthew Walker, Christ-

mas pudding manufacturer -

for £1.4m. Emile Tissot, the

frozen food business, would

be sold "when we are offered

the right price," Mr Saphir

said.

Japanese credit banks report mixed results

By Stefan Wagstyl in Tokyo

JAPAN'S three long-term credit banks report that increases in profits from lending operations, rose 76 per cent to Y16.2bn.

LTCB reported a 39.7 per cent rise to Y78.0bn. NCB saw net business profits soar 180 per cent to Y4bn.

These increases are much larger than those recorded earlier this week by Japanese commercial banks because long-term credit banks make long-term loans and so benefit from falling interest rates since their fund-raising costs fall faster than rates charged to borrowers. These large profit increases offset declines in financial investment income caused by the weakness in the Tokyo stock market.

All three banks suffered losses on the values of their stock portfolios. By restraining growth in assets, the three banks managed to keep their ratios of capital to assets above the 8 per cent minimum which the Bank for International Settlements will bring into effect next March. IBJ posted a ratio of 8.33 per cent, LTCB 8.27 per cent and NCB 8.32 per cent.

Banesto, BP may resolve stake dispute

By Peter Bruce in Madrid

BUT Banesto, due to falling profits at the Corporation, has been loath to do so, especially as BP has been trying to ensure it paid something similar to the price the stock was worth when the Petromed sale was completed. Since then, Banesto stock has fallen about 30 per cent.

Mr Conde announced consolidated group net profits - including the Corporation - of Pts23.8bn for 1991 (Y523m), a 7.29 per cent fall on 1990. This was largely due to the Corporation's profits falling from Pts43.9bn to just Pts2.8bn.

At Banesto bank, 1991 net profits rose 14.3 per cent to Pts45.6bn and its financial group (Banesto and affiliated banks) where pre-tax profits increased 25.7 per cent to Pts74.6bn.

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5½ per cent Guaranteed Bonds due 1992 with Warrants

NOTICE OF STOCK SPLIT OF SHARES AND ADJUSTMENT OF SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Board of Directors of OSG Corporation (the "Company") passed a resolution on April 17, 1992 (Japan time) authorizing a stock split of shares of its common stock to the shareholders of the Company at the rate of 1:16 share for each one share held. The record date for the stock split is May 31, 1992 (Japan time).

As a result of such stock split, the Subscription Price at which shares are issuable upon exercise of the Warrants has been adjusted pursuant to the Terms and Conditions of the Warrants as follows:

The Subscription Price of the Notes has been adjusted from Y706.80 per share to Y614.60 per share effective from June 1, 1992 (Japan time).

The Industrial Bank of Japan Trust Company on behalf of OSG Corporation

Dated: June 1st, 1992

Kleinwort Benson Limited

KLEINWORT BENSON GROUP plc (formerly Kleinwort Benson Lonsdale plc)

US \$100 million

Primary Capital

Undated Floating Rate Notes

US \$125 million

Primary Capital

Undated Floating Rate Notes (Series Two)

For the interest period 29 May 1992 to the 30 November 1992 all the above Notes will carry a rate of interest of 4.625 percent per annum with a coupon amount of US\$237.67

CHEMICAL BANK

Agent Bank

This notice is issued in compliance with the requirements of The International Stock Exchange of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland Limited ("the London Stock Exchange"). It is not an invitation to any person to subscribe for or purchase any shares in British Building and Engineering Appliances PLC. Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for 11,210,000 Ordinary shares of 25p each in British Building and Engineering Appliances PLC to be admitted to the Official List. It is expected that dealings will commence in such shares on 4th June 1992.

British Building and Engineering Appliances PLC
(incorporated in England under the Companies Act 1929, No. 329292)

Application for listing sponsored by
Albert E Sharp & Co
in connection with
the acquisition of building related companies from BM Group PLC

| Share Capital | | Issued and to be issued fully paid |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Authorised | | |
| £ 3,500,000 | Number 14,000,000 | Ordinary shares of 25p each |
| | | Number 2,802,500 |
| | | 11,210,000 |

Details of the above mentioned company are included in the Companies Fiche Service available from Exel Financial Limited, 37-45 Paul Street, London EC2A 4PB.

Copies of listing particulars dated 7th May 1992 and supplementary listing particulars dated 13th May 1992 relating to British Building and Engineering Appliances PLC will be available to the public (by collection only) during normal office hours for the next two business days from the Company Announcements Office of the London Stock Exchange, the London Stock Exchange Tower, Capel Court entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London EC2Z and on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) up to and including 16th June 1992 from:

Albert E Sharp & Co
Davies House
1 Sun Street
London
EC2A 2EP

1st June 1992

C. Itoh Finance (Europe) PLC

(Incorporated in England under the Companies Act 1948 to 1985)

US \$500,000,000

Guaranteed Floating Rate Notes

Due 1993

Unconditionally and irrevocably guaranteed as to payment of principal and interest by

C. Itoh & Co., Ltd.

(Incorporated with limited liability in Japan)

Notice is hereby given that the rate of interest for the interest period from 30th May, 1992 to 28th November, 1992 is

5.25% per annum. Interest payable on 28th November, 1992 in an amount of

Y2,772,603 per Y100,000,000 principal amount of the Notes.

Agent Bank

The Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, Limited Tokyo

For subscriptions call UK 44-828-23431 Hong Kong 852-523-2939

INTERNATIONAL BusinessWeek

This week's topics:

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EAST RIVER SAVINGS BANK

East River Savings Bank

U.S. \$100,000,000

Collateralized Floating Rate Notes due August 1993

For the three months 29th May, 1992 to 28th August, 1992 the Notes will carry an interest rate of 4.175% per annum with an interest payment date of 28th August, 1992.

Notes will carry an interest rate of 5.125% per annum with an interest payment date of 28th August, 1992.

Notes will carry an interest rate of 5.125% per annum with an interest payment date of 28th August, 1992.

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Notes will carry an interest rate of 5.125% per annum with an interest payment date of 2

COMPANIES AND FINANCE

Ferruzzi down sharply as debt expenses climb

By Haig Simonian in Milan

FERRUZZI Finanziaria (Ferfin), the holding company for Italy's second biggest private-sector industrial group, suffered a sharp drop in net attributable profits, to L1.61bn (\$93.8m) for 1991, against L2.45bn the previous year.

The decline, on the back of a 6.3 per cent rise in sales to L17.790bn, stems from a mixture of heavy debt costs, ambitious investments, and the non-recurrence of the extraordinary items which enhanced earnings in 1990.

Ferfin reaped substantial capital gains in 1990, principally from the sale by its Montedison subsidiary of its 40 per cent stake in the public-private Enimont chemicals joint venture. Asset sales in 1991 were more limited, despite the group's goal of concentrating on core sectors such as chemicals, agro-industrial and energy.

Gross operating profits rose 11.2 per cent to L1.962bn, despite lower margins for polymers, owing to lower demand from big industrial users.

The group balance sheet weakened further, with a rise in net debt to L8.198bn from L6.665bn in 1990 and a debt equity ratio down to 0.88 from 0.76. To broaden its funding sources, Montedison recently announced plans for a domestic bond issue of up to L500m.

Investment spending remained high at L1.156bn, although a small fall from L1.297bn in 1990 reflected the gradual completion of a heavy

Finmeccanica float closer

FINMECCANICA, the company controlling the engineering and aerospace activities of Italy's state-owned IRI group, has moved closer to flotation, writes Haig Simonian. It now has approval for its merger with Sifa, a quoted holding company owned by IRI.

Under the transaction, which involves a two-stage capital increase and a bond issue, Fin-

meccanica should raise around L2.400bn (\$1.9bn) and be quoted by November.

Shareholders in Sifa will be offered 9 shares in Finmeccanica for every 4 shares held, based on evaluation by Lehman Brothers, the US investment bank.

The deal is part of Italy's partial privatisation pro-

SEC to ease rules for asset-backed offerings

By Karen Zagor in New York

US companies may soon find it easier to issue asset-backed securities under a rule change proposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the US securities industry watchdog.

The SEC plans to ease regulations for asset-backed securities offerings by exempting issuers of the debt from provisions of the Investment Company Act, which regulates mutual funds in the US.

The SEC's latest proposal is part of its more general review of the 1940 act, which covers investment management regulation in the US. The SEC has been considering overhauling the rules governing the mutual fund industry for about two years.

Although the number of asset-backed offerings has risen sharply recently, the SEC believes the development of some types of asset-backed deals has been constrained by a requirement that the offerings be registered as mutual funds.

The latest proposal, which has been put out for public comment for 60 days, would free asset-backed offerings that meet some criteria from the SEC's mutual-fund rules. One of the requirements is that the securities receive above-investment-grade ratings by at least two rating agencies.

At present, the three largest types of asset-backed offerings - auto loan-backed, mortgage-backed and some credit card receivables - are already exempt from the mutual fund rules.

Correction

European Parliament

The FT of May 26 stated that the European Parliament hoped to raise Ecu 1bn from the international capital markets to pay for its new chamber and offices in Brussels. In fact the European Parliament will lease, and not own, the buildings. The actual borrower will be Société Espagnole Léopold.

A cut in steel production will have little impact on sales, which grew only 1.9 per cent to L1.205bn, because of weak demand for steel products.

Nippon Steel, the world's largest producer, had a 37.7 per cent fall in pre-tax profits, to Y100.3bn (\$77.74bn), due to a decline in steel sales. But a 21.7 per cent growth in its engineering business lifted total sales 0.8 per cent to Y1.065bn.

Its net profit increased 24.9 per cent to Y83.7bn due to the sale of fixed assets.

A cut in steel production will

have little impact on sales, which grew only 1.9 per cent to L1.205bn, because of weak demand for steel products.

The possible sale - now being negotiated - of a 34-storey property on Park Avenue may generate cash in the short term, but probably not enough. Other New York disposals could follow.

What everyone agrees is that O&Y filing or not, the US market has received a psychological blow.

David Shulmann, a commercial property specialist at Salomon Brothers in New York, predicts that O&Y's troubles will affect capital values and the confidence of investors. "If the Reichmanns, who are widely regarded as geniuses in real estate, can't make money, then investors will shy away from the market."

However Mr Shulmann and others in New York argue that even if O&Y did not exist, the outlook for the US commercial property market would still be fairly bleak.

In a study just published, the Salomon property team sur-

US VACANCY RATES AND OFFICE SUPPLY

Region Vacancy rate (%) Supply

North-east 7.5 21.4

Midwest 8.9 12.4

South-east 20.5 9.4

West California 21.0 8.7

N. West California 14.2 6.9

Salomon Brothers

Source: Salomon Brothers

construction cost

Mr Arthur Mirante, chairman of Cushman & Wakefield, the biggest commercial property manager in the US, says he does not think a further drop in values is likely. However he says he has never in his career seen a national vacancy rate so high.

Other property executives agree the present slump is far worse than the last big US property downturn in the mid-1970s, which was more a correction of a long-running bull market by comparison.

Mr Mirante says the rate of job growth is a key measure of recovery prospects; he complains that redundancies at many US companies are "keeping vacancy rates high" and markets from improving.

Mr Alvin Dworkman, a banker and property investor who manages a multi-billion dollar US property portfolio, calls the oversupply of US office space "gigantic". He notes that markets in northern California and parts of the Midwest are holding up reasonably well, and

that regions such as Texas and Colorado are already recovering from the worst.

But he says, the north-east is still "on a slight slide". He terms downtown Manhattan as "really very bad".

The recovering fortunes of several big US commercial banks, meanwhile, remain intertwined with the commercial property market. Where it seemed, at the start of 1992, that the banks had made enough bad debt provisions, the latest forecasts from analysts such as Standard & Poor's suggest many banks have not set aside enough reserves.

Last week S&P claimed the overhang of property loan losses "will continue to be a significant drain on industry earnings over the next few years".

The consensus in the US is that O&Y's troubles can only worsen an already gloomy outlook.

The market, as Salomon Brothers puts it, "is so deep in the hole of oversupply that it will take many years to climb out".

US faces up to the realities of oversupply

O&Y's woes have spoiled dreams of property sector recovery, writes Alan Friedman

Until quite recently, the US commercial property market thought it had seen the worst. Prices in some areas of the country had begun to stabilise and it was even agreed that values had probably bottomed out in the long-suffering north-east.

Then came Olympia & York. The placing of the company's Canary Wharf development into administration in the UK has sent a shiver through the US market. Suddenly fund managers, investors, bankers, bondholders, lawyers and property executives have had to contemplate a scenario in which the Reichmanns decide to file for the bankruptcy protection of all or part of their US property empire.

Some participants in the O&Y restructuring think it is inevitable that the Reichmanns will eventually make a US filing. And several O&Y creditors - and not only banks - are already understood to be seeking ways in which they can attach themselves to the company's US assets.

One advised to a big O&Y bank creditor says that over the next six months US credit-

Weak demand hits steelmakers

By John Burton in Tokyo

JAPAN'S FIVE largest steelmakers reported lower pre-tax profits for fiscal 1991 because of weak demand and higher production costs. One of the requirements is that the securities receive above-investment-grade ratings by at least two rating agencies.

At present, the three largest types of asset-backed offerings - auto loan-backed, mortgage-backed and some credit card receivables - are already exempt from the mutual fund rules.

The latest proposal, which has been put out for public comment for 60 days, would free asset-backed offerings that meet some criteria from the SEC's mutual-fund rules. One of the requirements is that the securities receive above-investment-grade ratings by at least two rating agencies.

Several companies have been trying to reduce dependence on steel by diversifying into other areas. This strategy has so far not increased profitability, but instead depressed earnings as interest costs climb due to increased capital spending.

Nippon Steel, the world's largest producer, had a 37.7 per cent fall in pre-tax profits, to Y100.3bn (\$77.74bn), due to a decline in steel sales. But a 21.7 per cent growth in its engineering business lifted total sales 0.8 per cent to Y1.065bn.

Its net profit increased 24.9 per cent to Y83.7bn due to the sale of fixed assets.

A cut in steel production will have little impact on sales, which grew only 1.9 per cent to Y1.205bn, because of weak demand for steel products.

NKK said lower domestic demand and a higher interest burden were responsible for its 25.5 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to Y37.5bn. But net profit climbed 53.8 per cent to Y5.5bn due to the sale of land.

Pre-tax earnings for fiscal 1992 are expected to fall to Y30bn, reflecting stagnant demand and a rise in interest costs as NKK almost doubles

SA investors extend Dutch broker interest

By Ronald van de Krol in Amsterdam

THE two stockbroking firms will retain their separate identities for the rest of this year before being integrated during 1993.

Integro's next priority for European expansion is Frankfurt, where it is particularly interested in the options and futures markets, according to Mr Ian Kantor, Integro's chief executive director and single biggest shareholder, with 25 per cent of the group's shares.

Sumitomo expects the costs of its merger with Nippon Stainless Steel in October to nearly halve pre-tax profits to Y25bn for fiscal 1992.

Kobe Steel said losses on securities holdings, as well as increasing operating costs, meant a 15.5 per cent fall in pre-tax earnings to Y47.7bn. Net profit climbed 24.7 per cent to Y23.2bn due to the sale of land.

Wouters, which has a staff of five, is to be integrated next year with Heerze, another small Amsterdam stockbroking firm acquired by Integro in 1992.

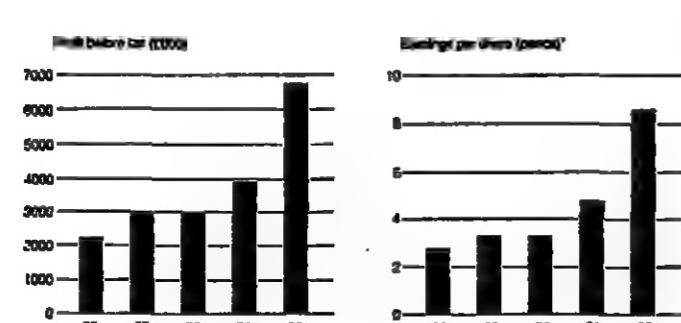
Terms of the latest deal were not disclosed.

Wouters' client list includes private as well as institutional investors. Heerze, which has a staff of six, concentrates mainly on European institutional investors.

Integro already has offices in Geneva, Zurich and London, where its activities include the trading of German bunds.

In South Africa, the group has a controlling interest in Invested Bank, an investment bank, as well as in two other Johannesburg-listed companies, Investec Holdings and Intrust.

Record profit for the year



*Restated for the 5 for 1 share split approved in February 1992

- Park Food Group plc, the country's leading packer of Christmas hampers reports record profits before tax advanced by 73 per cent at £6,890 million (£3,992 million) for the year ended 31 March 1992.
- The board is proposing a final dividend of 2.2 pence per share making a total dividend of 3.2 pence for the year (1.6 pence). The dividend increase reflects the success of the strategy of refocusing the group's activities onto the core businesses of hamper and specialist packing.

Park Food Group PLC, Valley Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside L41 7ED Telephone: 051-653 0566



PARK FOOD GROUP PLC

CITICORP MORTGAGE SECURITIES, INC.

REMIC Pass-Through Certificates, Series 1987-13
US\$57,057,000 Initial Stated Amount

of Class A-1 Citicorps Certificates

For the period 1st June, 1992 to 1st September, 1992 the Class A-1 Citicorps will carry an interest rate of 4.8125% per annum with an interest amount of US\$7.86 per US\$1,000 (the Initial Stated Amount of an individual Citicorps) payable on 1st September, 1992. The Stated Amount of the Citicorps outstanding will be 65.332855% of the Initial Stated Amount of the Citicorps, or US\$653.32 per individual Citicorps until 1st September, 1992.

See Annex 10A

Bank of America NY & Co.
London - Agent Bank

Banque Indosuez U.S.

Floating Rate Notes due 1997

For the three months 29th May, 1992 to 28th August, 1992 the Notes will carry an interest rate of 4.9% per annum and coupon amount of U.S. \$11.13 per U.S. \$10,000 Note, and U.S. \$2,794.51 per U.S. \$250,000 Note. Listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange

Bankers Trust Company, London Agent Bank

TURKEY IS SEEKING COMPANIES TO INVEST IN CONSTRUCTING A BETTER WORLD

Turkey has taken decisive steps to join the world economy. The privatization of state-owned enterprises is proceeding rapidly. In this context, II cement plant are being offered for sale to local and foreign companies willing to benefit from Turkey's integration with the world. Take advantage of this profitable opportunity: invest in Turkey. Invest in the 21st century.

Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry Public Participation Administration (KOİ) offers to sell all of its shares in the following companies:

| COMPANY NAME | PERCENTAGE OF SHARES SUBJECT TO SALE (%) | AMOUNT OF BID BOND (TL Million) | OPTIMUM CAPACITY (TON) |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| ADIYAMAN ÇİMENTO SANAYİİ T.A.Ş. | 100,00 | 5,000 | 620,000 |
| AŞKALE ÇİMENTO SANAYİİ T.A.Ş. | 100,00 | 5,000 | 350,000 |
| BARTIN ÇİMENTO SANAYİİ T.A.Ş. | 99,78 | 5,000 | 300,000 |
| ÇORUM ÇİMENTO SANAYİİ T.A.Ş. | 99,85 | 5,000 | 350,000 |

INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS

INTERNATIONAL BONDS

Floating-rate sector stirs after dormant two years

THE REVIVAL of the dollar floating-rate note market gathered momentum last week, with two more banks — Instituto Bancario San Paulo di Torino and Banco di Roma — raising funds in the international bond market.

Other financial institutions which issued in May included Banesto, SBAB, Crédit Lyonnais, Sumitomo Bank, Citicorp, and the World Bank.

Together with a handful of issues earlier in the year, the deals suggest that the FRN market is splintering into life after two years of dormancy.

The FRN market is a natural source of wholesale funding for banks and, in the late 1980s, it provided a ready supply of cash.

Bank treasurers usually prefer to take floating-rate funding as a matter of prudent balance sheet management: floating-rate liabilities linked to interbank interest rates are a good match for assets, since most loans are also Libor-linked.

However, during 1990 and 1991 the FRN market dried up. As most of the large economies moved into recession, interest rates were cut.

In this environment, few institutional investors wanted to hold floating-rate paper and take a diminishing return.

Banks themselves, keen buyers of FRNs in the 1980s to use additional

Top Danish bank launches \$100m subordinated FRN

By Sara Webb

DEN DANSKE BANK, Denmark's biggest bank, has launched an international offering of subordinated floating-rate notes.

The \$100m, eight-year issue is intended to count as upper tier 2 capital. It marks the first time a Danish bank has launched such notes in the inter-

lending capacity, came under pressure to shrink balance sheets to meet strict capital-to-assets ratios. Liquid floating-rate securities were easy to dump into the market.

Moreover, recession and loan losses led to a deterioration in the credit quality of most international banks. Investors demanded a higher return from bank FRNs and wider margins over interbank rates.

There are signs that these conditions are now reversing. Although US interest rates may be cut again to stimulate a sluggish economy, six-month dollar Libor — the reference rate for most dollar FRNs — may fall far below the current 4.25 per cent before rising again.

In this environment, there are good arguments for fund managers buying floating-rate instruments as

a natural hedge against higher interest rates in the future.

While banks remain under pressure to meet the capital adequacy ratios, the pressure to shrink balance sheets has passed.

Meanwhile, demand for loan finance in most economies remains very subdued. Buying FRNs is again seen as a way of using up any excess balance-sheet capacity.

In this respect, the Basle Accord on capital adequacy actually legislates in favour of bank FRNs: they carry only a 20 per cent risk weighting, against 100 per cent for loans to companies.

Hence a bank must set aside five times more capital against holdings of fixed-rate corporate bonds than against FRNs issued by another bank.

Meanwhile, the credit quality of

national market since the implementation of the EC Own Funds and Solvency Directives in 1990.

Under the Basle Accord on capital adequacy, banks must maintain a minimum capital-to-assets ratio of 8 per cent.

Half of the total capital must be tier 1 (or core) capital, consisting of common equity and perpetual

preference shares, and the remainder can be tier 2 (or non-core capital), including dated preference shares, subordinated loans and hybrid debt instruments.

Den Danske Bank's \$100m issue has a coupon of Libor plus 110 basis points during the first five years. Den Danske Bank has the right to redeem the notes at par

after five years; however if the bank does not call in the notes it will pay a coupon of Libor plus 250 basis points.

It has a long-term senior debt rating of A2z from Moody's Investors Service, and A-plus from Standard & Poor's.

Salomon Brothers said the issue was sold to traditional floating-rate note investors.

line, and in general of being beastly to the banks.

The government has won no friends in the City over the Canary Wharf affair. It is accused of dithering over moving civil servants eastwards, short-sightedness over the Jubilee

line, and in general of being beastly to the banks.

Yet the government has surely done the right thing by its own free-market principles. It has bailed nobody out, it will get its new offices cheaper, and some future landowner will surely regard a large contribution to the tube line as a prudent investment in value enhancement. Above all, there is a good deal to be said for being beastly to the banks at a time like this, not only to save money, but as a form of education.

The case is made in a new paper from the US National Bureau of Economic Research. Paul Asquith, Robert Gertner and David Scharfstein studied 102 companies which issued junk bonds and then got into cash-flow trouble (mainly, it seems, not because they could not afford the payments they had undertaken, but because the burden distracted their management and made them less competitive).

If swap rates continue to tighten, borrowers other than banks may find the FRN market a cheaper source of floating-rate funds than the straight bond market.

Simon London

Anthony Harris

Being beastly to the bankers



THE government has won no friends in the City over the Canary Wharf affair.

In the NBER study it was those companies which still had some assets they were free to sell which were likeliest to survive. In the UK, where companies have fewer alternatives to bank credit (and small companies none), the assets are all hooked; hence the business failures which follow any epidemic of banking folly. In the world of property development, this "system" has its merits: nothing so quickly restores sane values as a wave of receivers' sales.

But it would still be much better to prevent values being bid up to insane levels in the first place; and in the world of operating companies which produce goods and services, the process is disruptive and wasteful.

Can bankers be made wise? Probably not, but at least they can be kept cautious. The most effective way would be my own (largely friendless) proposal to outlaw collateral, by enacting that banks would rank with all other creditors in a bankruptcy (a one-clause Bill would do it). This would force banks into relationship banking, rather than simply paying lip service to it in hard times. Attention to cash-flow and management competence prevents nasty surprises — a sound practice which enabled some small banks to survive the holocausts in New England and Texas.

Failing a change in the rules, the best the government can do is prolong the agony, and so ensure that it is more than 17 years before folly breaks out again. It could also give a useful signal when it appoints a new governor to the Bank of England this year.

It should appoint none of those who were in authority during the Big Bang and the subsequent follies. However sage their private warnings may have been at the time, they are publicly identified with what happened on their watch. Much better a new banker like Lord Alexander, whose whole experience is of clearing up the mess, or, perhaps, a veteran like Mr David Scholay, who passed the "I" test, and kept his head.

*Anatomy of financial distress. Working Paper 332. NBER, 1050 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, Mass 02138-5392. \$5 (\$15 outside US).

| NEW INTERNATIONAL BOND ISSUES | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------------|----------|---------|------------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Borrowers | Amount m. | Maturity | Avg. life years | Coupon % | Price | Book number | Offer yield % | | |
| US DOLLARS | | | | | | | | | |
| Texaco Chem.Ind.(*)† | 100 | 1996 | 4 | 8 1/2 | 100 | Daiwa Europe | 3.125 | | |
| Venezuela Collat.DCB(?)† | 75 | 1994 | 2 | 8 1/2 | 99.50 | CSFB | 8.024 | | |
| Trinias(?)† | 40 | 1994 | 2.5 | 11 | 67.75 | ABN Amro | 12.069 | | |
| Banco di Romagna | 200 | 1997 | 5 | (1) | 100.15 | Suisse Int'l. | - | | |
| Ist.Ban.San Paolo(?)† | 120 | 1997 | 5 | (1) | 100.10 | Kidder Peabody Int'l. | - | | |
| Sanwa Fin.Arabs(?)† | 200 | 2002 | 10.25 | (1) | 100 | Samwa Int'l. | - | | |
| Credito Italiano(?)† | 200 | 1997 | 5 | (1) | 99.75 | Merrill Lynch Int'l. | - | | |
| Den Danske Bk.(m)‡ | 100 | 2000 | 8 | (m) | 100 | Salomon Bros. Int'l. | - | | |
| Wakil Urea Corp.(o)§ | 50 | 2002 | 10 | 3 | 100 | Jardine Fleming Int'l. | 3.000 | | |
| STERLING | | | | | | | | | |
| Municipality Financet | 100 | 1997 | 5 | 9.5 | 101.05 | CSFB | 9.228 | | |
| Bradford & Bingley B.S.(d)† | 100 | 1995 | 5 | (d) | 99.45 | Samuel Montagu | - | | |
| Coventry B.S.(?)† | 40 | (1) | - | 12.125 | 100.745 | Kleinwort Benson | - | | |
| ECUs | | | | | | | | | |
| Kommuninvest(?)† | 90 | 1995 | 3 | 8.525 | 101.41 | Natwest Cap.Mkt. | 9.057 | | |
| CANADIAN DOLLARS | | | | | | | | | |
| NTT Corp.† | 200 | 1997 | 5 | 8.5 | 101.41 | Goldman Sachs | 8.148 | | |
| BP America Inc.† | 150 | 2002 | 10 | 8.5 | 101.80 | CSFB | 9.248 | | |
| AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS | | | | | | | | | |
| Deutsche Bk Finance† | 100 | 1996 | 6 | 8 | 102.00 | Deut.Bk.Cap.Ntks. | 8.580 | | |

ENGLISH AND DUTCH INVESTMENT TRUST (Engels-Hollandse Beleggings Trust N.V.)

Established in Amsterdam

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the holders of the Participation Certificates ("PCs") issued pursuant to an Agreement of 4th April 1979 (as amended), for whom Royal Exchange Assurance acts as trustees ("the Trustees") holding Ordinary Shares in English and Dutch Investment Trust ("the Company") on their behalf, will be held at the offices of One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE on Tuesday 9th June 1992 at 2.30 p.m. ("the Meeting") for the purpose of considering and if thought fit giving directions as to the manner in which the Trustees shall exercise the voting rights attaching to the Ordinary Shares as held in respect of each of the resolutions to be put to the Extraordinary General Meeting of Shareholders of the Company to be held in Amsterdam on Wednesday 17th June 1992 at 12.00 hour ("the EGM") contained in the Notice for the EGM published herewith.

DATED this 1st day of June 1992.

ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE

One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE

A copy of the Agreement dated 4th April 1979 together with agreements supplemental thereto, copies of the report of the Meeting of 23rd April 1992, information-memorandum and insert, exit-arrangements, nomination of Supervisory Directors and nomination of Management are available for inspection at the above mentioned offices of Royal Exchange Assurance. Holders of PCs wishing to attend and vote at the Meeting must arrange to obtain from Hill Samuel Bank Limited at least three days before the Meeting Voting Certificates which will enable them to do so. To obtain Voting Certificates holders of PCs must deposit their PCs with Hill Samuel Bank Limited, to be held on deposit until after the meeting or any adjournment thereof. Forms for this purpose may be obtained from the offices of Hill Samuel Bank Limited, 45 Beech Street, London EC2P 2LX on request.

A Holder of PCs who has issued to him a Power of Attorney to enable attendance at the EGM will not be entitled to vote at the Meeting. The quorum required for the Meeting is three holders of PCs present in person. If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes of the appointed time for the Meeting it shall stand adjourned to the same time and place on Tuesday 16th June 1992 and at which one or more PC holders present in person shall form a quorum.

ENGELS - HOLLANDSE BELEGGINGS TRUST N.V. (English and Dutch Investment Trust)

Established in Amsterdam

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Extra-ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders will be held on Wednesday 17th June 1992 at 12.00 hours at the office of the Company, Keizersgracht 674, 1017 ET Amsterdam or with Hill Samuel Bank Limited, 45 Beech Street, London EC2P 2LX. A deposit certificate will be issued to such shareholders which, upon surrender, will entitle them to vote at the Meeting.

Agenda:

1. Opening.
2. Report of the Meeting of 23rd April 1992.
3. Resolution to change the investment policy into a real estate investment fund and conversion into closed-end fund (see insert in Prospectus dated 16th March 1992).
- a. adoption of the information-memorandum and insert.
- b. exit-arrangements.
- Only if item 3 of the agenda is adopted, items 4 and 5 will be considered.
4. Re-election and appointment of Supervisory Directors.
5. Appointment of Management.
6. Admittances and any other business.
7. Closing.

Shareholders wishing to attend the Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Company must inform the Board of Managing Directors in writing at least four days prior to the Meeting that they intend to attend the Meeting in person or by proxy. Holders of Participation Certificates issued by Royal Exchange Assurance who wish to attend and vote at the Meeting must contact the Trustee Department of Royal Exchange Assurance, One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE at least ten days before the Meeting. Royal Exchange Assurance is prepared to issue a power of attorney for the same number of shares held in trust as the Certificate Holders shall have deposited with Royal Exchange Assurance. Copies of the report of the Meeting of 23rd April 1992, information-memorandum and insert, exit-arrangements, nomination of Supervisory Directors and nomination of Management will be available at the offices of the above named.

By order of the Board

HOLLANDSE KOOPMANSBANK N.V.

MANAGEMENT

AMSTERDAM

NOTICE OF REDEMPTION
New Zealand

USS 200,000,000 10 1/4 per cent. Bonds due 1995

Pursuant to article 5 (b) of the Terms and Conditions of the Bonds, notice is hereby given that the Issuer will redeem the total amount remaining outstanding of the Bonds (i.e. USS 200,000,000) at 101 1/2% of their principal amount on July 15, 1992 (the "Redemption Date").

Payment of interest and premium due on July 15, 1992 and repayment of principal will be made against surrender of the Bonds and Coupons at the specified office of any of the Paying Agents listed below. Each Bond should be presented for redemption together with all unmatured Coupons appertaining thereto, failing which the amount of any such missing unmatured Coupons will be deducted from the sum due for payment on the Redemption Date and such amount of principal so deducted will be payable upon presentation of the missing Coupons.

Interest will cease to accrue on the Bonds as from July 15, 1992 unless, upon due presentation, payment is improperly withheld or refused.

Payment will be made at any of the following paying agencies:

Fiscal Agent and Principal Paying Agent:
Kredietbank S.A. Luxembourgeoise
43 boulevard Royal
L-2955 Luxembourg

Paying Agents:
Kredietbank N.V.
Arenbergstraat 7
B-1000 Brussels
Kredietbank N.V.
555 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022
(payments of principal only)

Luxembourg, June 1, 1992

1992 - a capital comment from UBS....

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|--|--|
| Guaranteed Export Finance Corporation PLC £350,000,000 FRN 1995 | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development ECU 450,000,000 FRN 2002 |
| Bank of Greece ECU 200,000,000 FRN 1997 | European Investment Bank ECU 500,000,000 FRN 2002 |
| Chubu Electric Power Company, Incorporated US\$350,000,000 7 per cent 1996 | Export Development Corporation ECU 200,000,000 9 per cent 1994 |
| Bell Canada C | |

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

FT MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

FT MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

• Current Unit Trust prices are available on FT Cityline, call 0801 123456. Calls charged at 30p/minute, a one off 10p connection fee will be applied. Calls charged at 30p/minute, a one off 10p connection fee will be applied. Calls charged at 30p/minute, a one off 10p connection fee will be applied.

FT MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

• Current Unit Trust prices are available on FT Cityline, call 0891 123456. Calls charged at 38p/minute, choose rate and 48p/minute at all other times. To obtain your free Unit Trust Code Booklet call 071-825-2121.

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE PRICES

Continued on next page

NYSE COMPOSITE PRICES

Continued from previous page

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MONDAY INTERVIEW

Exhibitor of good connections

Richard Breeden, chairman of the US Securities and Exchange Commission, talks to Martin Dickson and Patrick Harverston

On the wall of Mr Richard Breeden's office in Washington DC, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission has hung various photographs of himself in the company of President George Bush; conning intently over a meal; at a black tie gathering; and so on.

Nothing unusual in that, you may think: offices the world over are hung with vanity pictures of their occupants cosying with the rich, powerful or famous.

Yes, but... this is just the beginning. Amid the blinking computer terminals and clocks showing the time around the globe, a good part of the wall space in the SEC chairman's office is devoted to images of Mr Bush, with or without Mr Breeden. Here is the president playing a horsey game of horseshoes; there he is looking windswept and nautical; and here he is being sworn in to office. Several photos are the size of oil paintings.

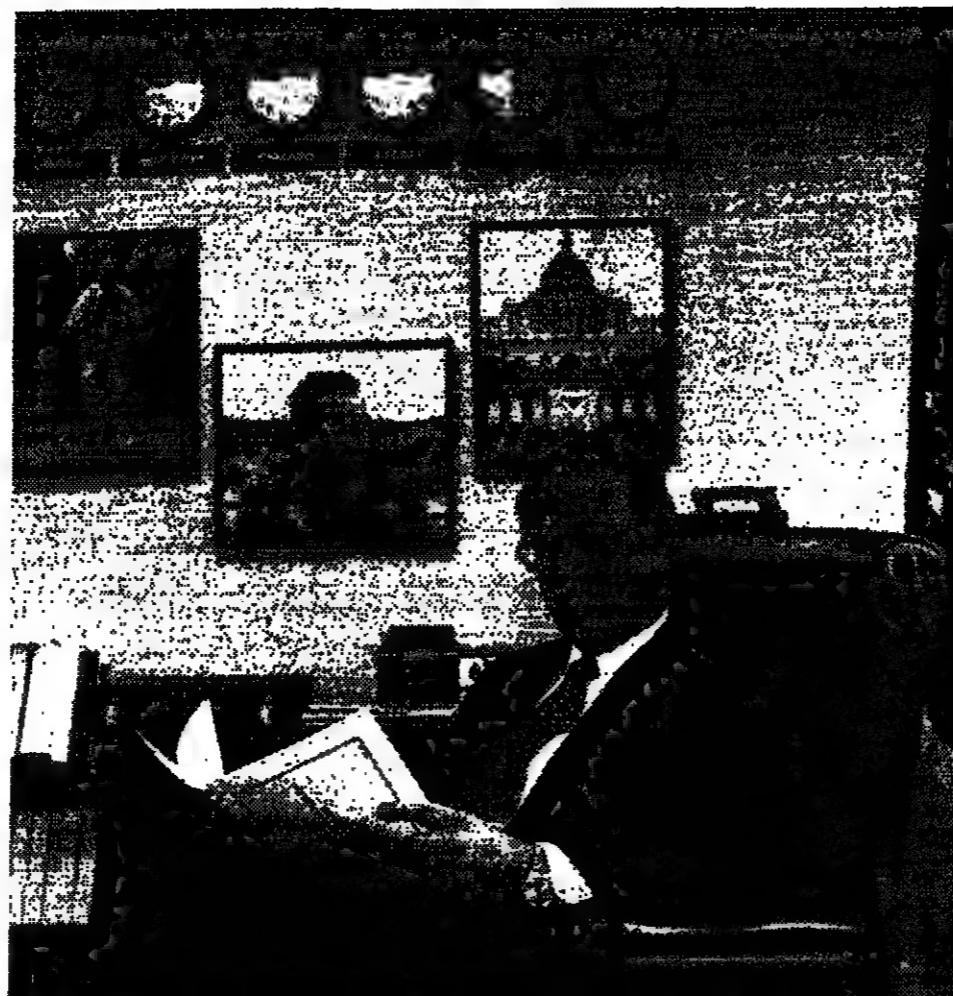
Mr Breeden's admiration for Mr Bush is hardly surprising: he was plucked to head the SEC from within the Bush White House and served on Mr Bush's vice-president staff in the early 1980s.

But the display also sends a forceful message, intentional or not, that Mr Breeden has good connections in the most important domestic residence in the land. And for an SEC chairman, that is a position unusually close to the centre of power, bringing both advantages and disadvantages.

The connections were no doubt helpful back in 1988 when, at the age of 38 and with no direct experience of working inside a securities company, Mr Breeden was named to head the SEC, the government agency that oversees Wall Street.

In the two and a half years since then, he has stamped his own mark clearly on the commission, through an energetic spate of regulatory initiatives. These have been widely praised, but have also prompted accusations of ruthless empire-building from other parts of the Washington bureaucracy.

The past week and a half have produced a particular flurry of activity: Mr Breeden has unveiled proposals for the first significant shake-up of the fast-growing US mutual fund industry in half a century - a package that could, among



'Markets don't go to sleep'

part culprit of both the S&L disaster and the current weakness of the US banking system is this deposit insurance system: "I do not believe in asking the taxpayers of the US to stand behind every dumb decision made by a lending officer. That ought to be the bank's and the shareholders' responsibility."

He points out that there is no such safety net for the US securities industry, which remains a world leader in both size and innovative techniques. Market disciplines, he says, are stronger and more omnipresent.

PERSONAL FILE

1948 Born Long Island, New York. Educated Stanford University and Harvard Law School.

1972 Teaching at University of Miami School of Law.

1978 Associate with law firms Cravath, Swaine & Moore, and Wilkies, Farr & Gallagher.

1982 Deputy counsel to Vice-President Bush and staff director of President Reagan's Task Group on Regulation of Financial Services.

1986 Partner with law firm Baker & Botts; assistant for issues analysis in the Bush White House.

1988 Chairman, SEC.

ant than any number of rule-setting bureaucrats and bank examiners. "Markets don't go to sleep."

The US securities markets have, however, been displaying a tendency to fragment, with the once dominant New York Stock Exchange giving up more and more of the pie to electronic dealer-driven markets or computerised, intermarket free networks. Despite the protestations of the New York exchange, Mr Breeden's SEC has given a host of innovative high-tech trading

systems the regulatory green light.

He is involved in another public dispute with the New York exchange, which wants the SEC to relax its strict financial disclosure requirements for foreign companies in the hope this will encourage more of them to list in the US.

Mr Breeden says he is anxious to make the US securities market more accessible to foreign companies, and hints that there is a little room for manoeuvre on disclosure requirements with the New York exchange. But he rejects the argument that "if we give regulators a system good enough for some country it ought to be good enough for the US. That's just a race to the bottom. That's what we would call competition in laxity."

Much of the argument centres on German companies, which have a radically different accounting system from the US, and one, says Mr Breeden, which "denies the basic proposition that public investors have a right to know how the company is doing".

US investors, he says, must be given an "information bridge" which enables them to compare the performance of US and foreign companies.

He finds it strange that Volvo of Sweden, Honda of Japan and Fiat of Italy, all of which have American listings, can comply with the US standards "yet we're told we have to throw our whole system out of the window to accommodate Mercedes-Benz. Well, that is not likely to happen."

His achievements in putting more muscle into the SEC have led him into clashes with other regulatory agencies - for example, with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (over who should regulate stock index futures) and the Federal Reserve (over bank accounting methods). Such fights are only natural in an

era where financial markets are converging and, therefore, so are the bureaucracies that police them.

More serious are accusations, including some from current and former SEC commissioners, that Mr Breeden has recently been politicising the institution - which has always been carefully aloof from the party fray - by tilting policies towards the White House line. His critics paint a portrait of a man consumed by political ambition, aiming for a significant minority - most visible as a disaffected urban underclass - is dependent: either unable or unwilling to grasp new opportunities. Poverty experts see policies aimed explicitly at changing behaviour as the only way to energise the passive, non-working poor and hence propel them into the social mainstream.

Mr Breeden has repeatedly denied compromising the agency's independence, while the "politically ambitious" label infuriates him. He would prefer to be seen as a lawyer from the private sector doing his bit of public service.

But it is easy to see how such ideas multiply when you have the president of the United States as an office pin-up. And in any case, what is so bad about ambition?

Mr Lawrence Mead, an academic at New York University, is one of the most articulate exponents of such theories, known as "the new paternalism".

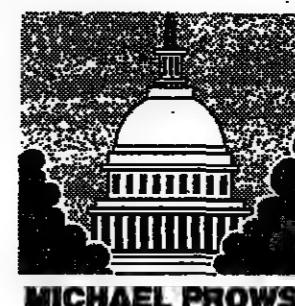
The notion that governments should seek to mould the behaviour of citizens is somewhat chilling. It conjures up images of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, where the social and genetic conditioning was so absolute that even the subhuman "deltas" were perfectly content with their menial lot. Yet this seems to be the direction in which US social policy is moving. Many poverty experts argue that the obstacles to self-advancement in the inner city and elsewhere are internal rather than external: psychological rather than economic.

Modern society may be moving into a third phase. In the first pre-capitalist phase, only an aristocratic elite enjoyed high living standards. The industrial revolution ushered in a second "progressive" phase during which the mass of working people improved themselves, partly through the opportunities created by free markets and partly by pressing successfully for a host of social reforms, such as government pensions, healthcare and jobless benefits. In this phase, reformers of all political stripes made a critical assumption: the poor are no different from anybody else and will respond positively to incentives. By competence, he means all the qualities that allow a person to get ahead economically - not only intelligence but foresight, energy, discipline, and the ability to sacrifice for the future. He believes the challenge is no longer to alter the economic or social structure of society, but to change the personal psychology of dysfunctional adults.

Controversially, Mr Mead blames poverty squarely on lack of work effort, not low wages. If the poor worked as hard as the middle classes they would not be poor. On his figures, only 18 per cent of the heads of poor families work full-time; less than half work at all. The top fifth of the income distribution works seven times as many hours as the bottom fifth. He claims that most barriers to work are largely imaginary: there are still plenty of unskilled jobs; most women can arrange childcare quite cheaply; welfare benefits are too low to provide a rational alternative to employment. The problems lie mainly in people's heads.

It is not that the poor are social rebels. Surveys indicate that welfare claimants share the same values as the rest of society: for example, they affirm the importance of steady employment and law and order. On many social issues, the poor are actually more conservative than the better off: "They value external controls on behaviour exactly to the extent that their internal controls leave a sour taste. But market liberals who put freedom first should remember how much their philosophy takes for granted. Those who flourish under capitalism have usually been subject to heavy psychological moulding during childhood, both at school and in the home. They have been trained to respond to the right incentives. The new paternalists are no more authoritarian: they merely want to tackle dependency by providing a little extra training for those who missed out in childhood."

**The New Politics of Poverty, Basic Books New York, \$25.*



The new politics of dependency

are less secure." For Mr Mead, the core problem is that the poor have difficulty organising their lives and responding constructively to the opportunities that do exist. They are "dutiful but defeated", unable to put good intentions into practice.

The solution is not more incentives or opportunities but - horror of horrors - enforcement. Mr Mead strongly supports workfare, or policies that make welfare benefits conditional on work or training. Mandatory requirements are necessary to "overcome the defeatism of the clients, to engage their own energies in the quest for employment". He claims that welfare is much less resisted by the poor than intellectuals suspect, mainly because the aim is to enforce values that clients already possess. Indeed, some clients are gratified to be chased up by officials because it indicates an interest in their lives. The main purpose is not to force people unwillingly into jobs but to ensure they organise themselves for regular activity outside the home. Authority thus operates as the midwife, not the antithesis, of freedom," he claims.

New paternalism is still a sideshow. But as states implement the 1988 Family Support Act, workfare requirements will become more common. It is likely to mark the beginning of a new trend, in which government agencies demand rather than merely encourage changes in behaviour.

The reliance on authority leaves a sour taste. But market liberals who put freedom first should remember how much their philosophy takes for granted. Those who flourish under capitalism have usually been subject to heavy psychological moulding during childhood, both at school and in the home. They have been trained to respond to the right incentives. The new paternalists are no more authoritarian: they merely want to tackle dependency by providing a little extra training for those who missed out in childhood.

**The New Politics of Poverty, Basic Books New York, \$25.*

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FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

Five men who could become Prime Minister; a chat with the people's friend Page 2

SECTION III

Spain is celebrating its political and economic rebirth in flamboyant style. When the year's festivities are over, it will be asked to start paying the high price of its return to democracy and its European Community status. Peter Bruce writes in this six-page survey

Comes the reckoning

SPAIN'S YEAR of fiesta as it celebrates the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage to America, the World Fair in Seville and the Olympic Games in Barcelona, will touch almost 20m people.

It is a happy time and the perfect opportunity to salute Spain's progress since it emerged 16 years ago from the shadow of an introverted and small-minded dictatorship.

But there is a cloud to this silver lining, probably one which only the people who run the country saw coming. For 1992 is also the year in which Spain is being asked to start paying the price of its young democracy's return to respectability and its entry in 1986 into the European Community.

It is hard to describe what that meant to Spain, although it is measurable. Between 1986 and 1988 the Spanish economy grew at an average 5 per cent a year, far outpacing its large Community partners. Foreigners pumped about \$30bn in direct investment into the country and more than \$300bn into its debt and equity markets. Poor Spaniards rushed to fill their tiny homes with fridges and TV sets. Old cars were left to rot in ditches while new ones filled the streets.

As imports were sucked in, Spain's current account plunged into deficit and has risen from surplus to a \$15bn deficit in four years while the central government and 17 autonomous regional governments, not to be outdone, jumped on the freespending bandwagon.

By last year central and regional government were borrowing some \$23bn to finance their budgets, double 1988 borrowings, and efforts to stick with budgetary limits were simply thrown out of the window. Last year, the central government planned for a \$5bn budget deficit and ended the year with a figure nearly three times bigger, passing the budget target in about April.

This year, the figure is a more realistic \$11bn but even that might be wildly optimistic. The state's cash deficit - which excludes interest payments - by the end of the first quarter of this year was 45 per cent higher than in 1990.

The figures are, in themselves, manageable, but the socialist government of Prime Minister Felipe González, in its 10th year in office, has an agenda that gets in the way. Mr González is not really a socialist. He is a modern nationalist determined that his country should not be left floundering with Portugal and Greece once the European Community goes ahead with economic and monetary union



At Fuengirola's summer festival of the Virgin, for all Spain, 1992 is a year of feasts with a serious lining

and mints a single currency.

There may be arguments for waiting beyond the 1997 or 1999 deadlines set by the EC for this but they fall on deaf ears in Madrid's ministries. The González legacy to Spain will be to have shovelled it into the heart of Europe and locked it in, irreversibly, at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Prime Minister knows better than anyone that unless Spain is pushed, it would find 1,000 reasons not to jump. When he and his Finance Minister, Mr Carlos Solchaga, went to the Maastricht summit of EC leaders last December it was to deliver just that punch by committing Madrid to the tough macroeconomic targets the summit established as necessary for any EC member to

enter into EMU. Unless the Community's direction radically changes and Maastricht is discarded or softened to allow for the entry of new members, *la suerte está echada*. For Spain, the die is cast.

Madrid has five years to meet those targets, which will demand big cuts in inflation, interest rates and the public deficit. It is not a long time, considering that Spain failed to impose this promised discipline during the good years after 1986 and is now going to have to find a way to do so, and continue growing faster than the EC average, in a period of economic slowdown.

Many of the targets in the convergence plan drawn up by Mr Solchaga seem quite optimistic, including 3 per cent

growth this year and a reduction in the public deficit from a massive 4.4 per cent of GDP last year to just one per cent at the end of 1996. Spaniards have heard these promises before and they have always been sacrificed to political expediency and pressure from the socialist party. It happened last year when Mr Solchaga's tough budget draft was expanded to still further unease.

While the plan's targets go beyond what Maastricht demanded the jury will stay out this time until it sees clear evidence of implementation. Mr González has to call a general election before October next year and Mr Solchaga's next budget will be the last before that poll. Experience suggests he will try to be true to the apparent freedom Mr González has given him to rein in public spending but, equally, that the party may fight it.

But visitors to Spain's 1992 celebrations may run foul of convergence fairly quickly. Mr Solchaga, acutely aware that his plans to cut spending and to liberalise protected service industries could run into a all manner of hurdles if socialists political prospects begin to dim, in April took the unusual step of decreeing, without much debate, a sweeping cut in unemployment benefits which he combined with an increase in the time in work required to qualify for benefit. The measure could save Madrid up to \$4bn this year alone.

The trade unions, which

behave in Spain as an extra-parliamentary opposition, were quick to respond.

They called a half day general strike last week and, unless the decree is withdrawn, a full day general strike will be held in October as well. The government is so far refusing to withdraw it and is managing, so far, to keep socialist party nerves steady by promising small changes. If the unions get the upper hand, more would be given away.

For the moment, considerable labour unrest in the summer and autumn is almost inevitable, but it is the unions, not the Government, who might find the going tougher. As the strikes will not be about pay, it might be harder to sustain any mobilisation.

What is happening could fundamentally change Spain. If the Government gets through the strikes and an election unscathed or even as leader of a coalition (which, if it were with the big Catalan party Convergencia i Unió, would not overly bother Mr González), it should have little difficulty implementing the rest of the convergence plan. That would blow away cobwebs - the pharmacy monopoly, ancient and powerful professional colleges, secure professorships and the doors that still remain closed to foreigners - in which much of Spain's economic culture is still trapped.

In spite of the rapid modernisation of the country's infrastructure and financial markets, Spain still has to make one more giant leap before it can sit at the same table with the richer Community powers it so yearns to emulate. It is not a competitive economy yet.

A recent confidential survey by the Industry Ministry found that fewer than half of Spanish businesses knew what effect the Single Market would have on them from next year. Nevertheless, local businesses had quickly absorbed the implications of one of the Government's boldest recent decisions - to lift all capital controls - and almost half of the companies consulted said they intended dropping high cost Spanish banks to search

IN THIS SURVEY

PAGE TWO

FELIPE Gonzalez: modern nationalist and arch reformer; live potential leadership contenders; a talk with the ombudsman

PAGE THREE

TRADE unions bite the strike bullet; the 17 regions of Spain seek looser ties with the centre; map of the principal cities

PAGE FOUR

PROUD Catalonia basks in Barcelona's Olympic glory; survival guide for the visitor

PAGE FIVE

PAINFUL convergence with Europe; private television arrives; key facts



Prime Minister Felipe González: the moderniser

for more competitive lenders elsewhere in the EC.

The only way for a Spanish bank to compete with that kind of pressure is to cut its lending rates and reduce the industry's huge lending margin (around 4 per cent of total assets, the EC's highest, after Greece and Portugal) to competitive Community levels. News like that must make life worth living for Mr Solchaga, who is attacked almost constantly and by almost everyone for forcing this economy to compete. But, somehow, in a pre-electoral period, with fixed capital formation plummeting (from 14 per cent growth in 1988 to a tiny 1.6 per cent rise last year), with unions on the attack and no

□ Continued on page 4

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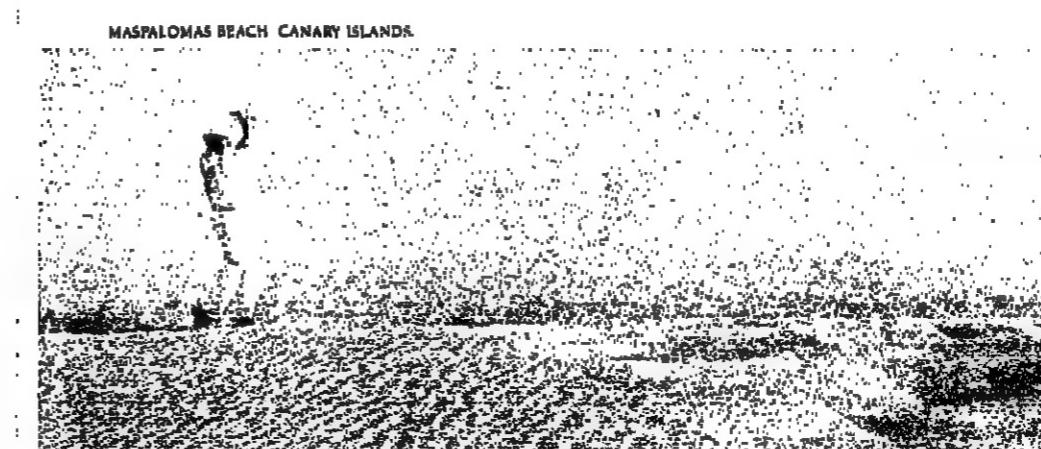
Financial highlights

| | Million Pesetas | | Million US \$ | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 |
| OPERATING REVENUES | 1,571,959 | 1,691,180 | 16,417 | 17,620 |
| OPERATING INCOME | 111,092 | 129,035 | 1,160 | 1,344 |
| NET INCOME | 67,747 | 70,170 | 707 | 731 |
| CASH FLOW | 144,365 | 171,959 | 1,507 | 1,792 |
| ASSETS | 1,188,643 | 1,269,177 | 12,414 | 13,223 |
| SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY | 406,478 | 450,026 | 4,245 | 4,689 |

| | Pts. / Share | | US \$ / ADR | |
|---------------------|--------------|------|-------------|------|
| | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 |
| EARNINGS PER SHARE | 226 | 234 | 2.36 | 2.44 |
| CASH FLOW PER SHARE | 481 | 573 | 5.02 | 5.97 |

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REPORTEAR



SPAIN 2

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez resets his sights

Ten years, and still running

FELIPE GONZALEZ can seem so careless sometimes. "It makes you want to shake him," says a long time admirer. When he rose to the speaker's podium in Parliament in March to deliver his state of the nation address he seemed tired and distant.

Such Gonzalez appearances are rare and eagerly anticipated as much by his opponents as by his friends. But the speech was delivered in a monotone - most of it was read in a hurry - and he only stopped once to chuckle. No one else caught the joke. Was he laughing at his own performance or at what he was reading?

It was astonishing, really. The Spanish Prime Minister was proposing a radical effort to reform or crush the stubborn rigidities in Spanish life

Spain lives by rumour and innuendo, but it is all perfectly natural

- from the easy frauds that encourage people to become officially unemployed to the comfortable guilds that protect and preserve the high costs of professional services. These go to the very core of the way Spaniards live.

It was only a few days later, when the Finance Minister had put some meat on the bones Mr Gonzalez had thrown to parliament, that the true import of the changes dawned on the trades unions. They quickly began to threaten all manner of revenge, (as discussed in a separate article).

The importance of Mr Gonzalez's off-hand treatment of the unions was a measure of his state of mind.

Opponents have been suggesting for years that the Prime Minister, who has been in office since October 1982, is tired. Wild rumours swirl about. One day he is said to be after the presidency of the European Commission (this is probably not the case) and the next day his eye is said to be on the Socialist International (again, no).

A week later, he will be depressed at the strained relations between his Government

and the socialist party, of which he is also leader. Or maybe his health will be troubling him. Spain lives by rumour and innuendo and all of this is perfectly normal.

But it is probably reasonable to assume that he is tired. Tired may be a better word. Mr Gonzalez never wanted to change Spain, just calm it down after so many years of nervous dictatorship and tumultuous transition. It is his stated aim to raise Spain to be an average country, with average European Community incomes, average lifestyles and average output.

This struggle may have been captivating while Spain was a long way from converging with the rest of its European neighbours. But as Spain gets closer Mr Gonzalez naturally comes under pressure to reset his sights beyond nominal convergence and this is hard, even for a politician as successful as he has been. It means changing gear and taking a constantly bickering party with him.

The March speech suggested

Mr Gonzalez was either not going to bother much taking his party - still dominated at an administrative level by the Left - with him or that he had somehow already persuaded the bulk of the organisation's leadership they had no option to follow him. Given the subsequent expressions of support for the convergence plan he was outlining, the latter may well be the case. What is crucial now is how that support holds up in the face of union attack.

The Left has an interest in not rocking the boat too soon. If the unions succeed in changing economic policy and the jobless benefit cuts in the Plan, then Finance Minister Carlos Solchaga's position in the Government will be greatly weakened. Mr Solchaga is deeply despised in party headquarters but his strength in Government is, for the moment, unquestionable.

Just two weeks after making that speech the fruits of the convergence plan - steep cuts in unemployment benefits - had become law.

Although he will allow the party to tinker with the benefits decree, he seems to

have abandoned his customary caution and, following his instincts, finally turned both ears to Mr Solchaga, who has told him that unless Spain dramatically streamlines its top heavy bureaucracy, forces workers to seek jobs and fiercely attacks high prices - be they lawyers or plumbers' fees - the country could drift well past the turn of the century trapped by a ring of inefficient traditions that almost guarantees mediocrity.

Union pressures may still panic the party but electoral arithmetic makes it relatively easy for him to be this cavalier. Even if the implementation of this plan damages socialist party support, there is simply no-one in the party capable of winning more votes for it in the next general election (which must be held by

challenge to the convergence plan.

But the next term of office could take the socialists right up to convergence and the scheduled creation of Economic and Monetary Union in the European Community by the end of 1992 and it would be courageous to bet on the Prime Minister fighting a fifth election then.

His going does not depend on another job being found for him. It depends on the socialist party being able to find someone who can win elections for it. Spanish politics concentrate on leaders, not programmes, and without him, the face of politics here changes completely.

For a start, it means that his current opponent - Mr Jose Maria Aznar, the leader of the conservative Partido Popular - would become vulnerable to challenges from an attractive right wing crusader, unsullied by years of opposition politics. Mr Gonzalez's going will be exactly the right time for such a person to bid for office.

That person may be Mr Mario Conde, a young banker, chairman of Banesto, one of the country's biggest banks, and an articulate though still not quite engaging enough spokesman for an even fitter economy than the pragmatic socialists have been able to erect. Large parts of the opposition press already champion him but now is not the moment. No-one will beat Felipe Gonzalez in the next election but the moment he goes, the search for a new face, new voice, begins and it really does not matter which party - within reason - he or she belongs to.

Nevertheless, assuming that Mr Gonzalez will make his next election his last is not without risks. There is no grander position in Spain for him to occupy and the parliament and the senate in Spain are not places anyone with his talents would want to spend much time as a former leader.

And he is not a rich man. He would probably find it quite hard to buy a good apartment in Madrid if he had to.

So there is an inertia that keeps him in office. It will not last forever, though.

It is risky to assume the Premier will make the next election his last

October 1993 other than himself. Whatever he does, the party, which now has exactly half the seats in parliament, will not get rid of him.

Even assuming a loss of support, from Mr Gonzalez's increasingly conservative point of view the prospects of a coalition are almost attractive. This would almost certainly be with the ruling party in Catalonia, Convergencia i Unio (CIU) or, more remotely, with the biggest Basque party, the PNV.

Both are conservative, and the presence of either in a Gonzalez government would allow him (and Mr Solchaga) to ignore the more strident left wing of the socialist party because of the demands of coalition.

A Catalan or Basque partner would add pressure on Madrid to devolve more power but there is little chance that such a scenario would split the socialists, who would still be able to enjoy the fruits of power, in the short term. It is, anyway quite possible that the socialists, under Mr Gonzalez, might improve their share of the vote in the next election. That would depend on how well the unions manage their

attack.

Two things are, however, likely: a replacement to fight the last election of the century will come from within the party and, second, anyone too closely associated with the former left wing deputy prime minister and current party vice president, Mr Alfonso Guerra, would probably be unelectable.

Five possible candidates to replace Mr Gonzalez are briefly profiled, in alphabetical order, below:



Politicians to watch (l to r) Narciso Serra, Javier Solana, Jose Borrell, Carlos Solchaga and Jose Bono

Some of the leaders who could one day win the top job

Heirs not so apparent are waiting in the wings

• **José Bono Martínez:** A lawyer and president of the autonomous region of Castilla-La Mancha in central Spain since 1983.

He was once considered a confidante of Alfonso Guerra, who runs the party machine. But Felipe Gonzalez has begun to lean on regional leaders like Mr Bono to offset left wing pressure from party headquarters in Madrid, drawing them closer to Government and away from party.

An election has to be held before October 1993 and the next one four years later. All that is too late for one of the wisest men in the Cabinet, the foreign minister, Mr Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, and too early, probably, for one of the brightest battle tested politicians in the party, Mr Ramón Jauregui, PSOE leader in the Basque Country.

Two things are, however, likely: a replacement to fight the last election of the century will come from within the party and, second, anyone too closely associated with the former left wing deputy prime minister and current party vice president, Mr Alfonso Guerra, would probably be unelectable.

Secretary of State for the revenue service until his elevation to the Cabinet last year, Borrell has, along with the Prime Minister, probably the most pristine reputation in Government. That did not necessarily mean support, but rather an attempt to appear above intra-party bickering. The press likes him.

• **José Borrell Fontelles:** Young and intense, Borrell is minister of Public Works and Transport, the biggest spender in the Cabinet.

Secretary of State for the revenue service until his elevation to the Cabinet last year, Borrell has, along with the Prime Minister, probably the most pristine reputation in Government.

• **Javier Solana Madariaga:** Education Minister and former culture minister and government spokesman. Solana has managed to push controversial education reforms through without alienating the unions or students. He nevertheless

keeps a low profile. His position in the party is strong and he is the senior Madrileno in the executive.

Solana has managed to escape being identified too closely with either the left or right of the party, though for a while in the 1980s his brother's chairmanship of the telephone monopoly Telefónica and, later, the state-owned television and radio stations invited some accusations of nepotism.

• **Carlos Solchaga Catalán:** The architect of the socialist government's rapid drift towards liberal market economic policies, Solchaga probably has more political enemies than any other Spanish politician.

He has a small power base in his home region of Navarra but the party is deeply suspicious of him. Relenting on big budget cuts planned for this year helped that relationship.

Mostly, Solchaga speaks to Gonzalez and Serra, who then tell the party what new misery he plans to inflict on socialism. It makes it unlikely the party could ever bring itself to elect him leader, or prime ministerial candidate, but that does not mean he would not want the job. Confident and dismissive of doubters, he is the best infiltrator in the Cabinet.

An interview with Alvaro Gil-Robles, the Spanish ombudsman**The people's friend**

ALVARO GIL-ROBLES is, officially, the people's friend. The son of a controversial conservative leader during the Spanish republic 1932-1936, he is *el Defensor del Pueblo*, the Government-appointed ombudsman to the nation.

Gil-Robles sees the down-side of Spanish life as people bring him their complaints. But he is also an optimist - an educated and demanding Spain is, he says, rapidly shedding the detritus of half a millennium of morale and conflict.

QUESTION: It is 500 years since Spain as we know it was created. Has the way Spaniards and their rulers regard each other changed much since then?

ANSWER: Yes and no. The Spanish people have 500 years of conflict behind them. Spain has undergone a great transformation, more in the past few years than at any other time. They have learned the lessons of many years of misunderstandings, of angry and violent conflicts, and have established a basis for peaceful understanding between each other. They have also learned they cannot live in isolation. They have had to open themselves to the European phenomenon and this has required an important mental leap. They want public services to work and although everyone complains, they pay their taxes. Also, this is the first time parties of all ideologies have backed a single Constitution while at the same time we have set a great regional (political) project in place.

QUESTION: Is this once centralised country becoming a federal one?

I really cannot say. Not long ago the thought of politically autonomous regions (the 1978 Constitution established 17)

would have been distant and strange to many millions of Spaniards. This was a centralised culture and we had had centuries of other models failing. Now, suddenly, the regional ideal seems possible.

The regions have their own dynamic, they have not distorted the country, then have not made it poorer.

QUESTION: But after the Reconquest ended in 1492 Spaniards seemed to surrender their hard-fought liberty back to a powerful central power. Are they now taking it back?

The key is education. By the start of this century, Spain was riddled with inequalities. Millions of citizens had no real access to culture or education. Wealth was very badly distributed. Until the 1950s, we were a nation of emigrants, a people without a modern economy. There was nothing to do but



Gil-Robles: an optimist who sees the sorrows of Spain

long-distance runners. I believe we can be. Convergence will force us to stop thinking about today. We will have to begin to be professional, rigorous, serious, to plan. We need to drop our bad habit of wanting everything to happen at once. One example is the tourist industry. We have destroyed our coasts and built a poor tourist infrastructure, but when the Expo happens in Seville or the Olympics take place in Barcelona suddenly hotel prices rocket. This is awful and there is no reason for it if we want to maintain serious and solid tourism policies.

QUESTION: What do Spaniards complain about?

About many things but they do it with intelligence. They complain because the system of justice is so slow. It's a fact and important to the economy. Part of the principle of legal security is that justice is agile. They want the public administration to improve and to be a service rather than an instrument of power. They want that when they have a sore ear the social security don't hand

young idea here.

At Maastricht Spain pledged to converge its economy with the rest of the EC by 1997. How will the country react when what could be a second transition, another modernising leap?

One has always known that we Spaniards are capable of doing extraordinary things very quickly. The question is whether we can also be

■Continued on Page 5

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SPAIN 3

Trade unions drift uneasily into a showdown with Madrid

The hesitant tendency

IF THEIR own rhetoric is any guide, then the next 12 months – perhaps the next 12 weeks – are going to be extremely testing for Spain's two big trades unions, the socialist General Workers' Union (UGT) and the communist Workers' Commissions (CCOO).

Both have pronounced the economic convergence plan presented to the country by the Government in April, and its steep cuts in unemployment benefits, as the worst attack ever by a democratic Spanish government on the country's work force. Both promised to respond with all their might.

A series of nationwide stoppages, in late May and in October, now threaten the country's 1992 celebrations. Nevertheless, the unions have been strangely divided about their reaction to the Plan, and especially the cuts in unemployment benefit, which are central to it.

Mr Narciso Redondo, the ageing UGT leader and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's political godfather in the 1970s, has been so outraged by the plans that he moved well beyond the normally more radical CCOO,

and was first to call for a general strike.

Only weeks after the decree implementing the benefits were published, he and the CCOO leadership able to agree on a time table for union action.

Their initial inability to say the same thing in the face of the same threat was a telling reminder of how cleverly the Government has begun to spot weaknesses in what was assumed to be a solid trade union front. The UGT and the

Cuts in unemployment benefits are seen as the toughest steps against the workforce since the days of Franco

CCOO combined very effectively to organise a one day general strike in December 1988 against government employment policies.

A long drama is being played out here. After Franco's death the unions managed to win, in spite of relatively small memberships, a role in the way

Spain constructed its new democracy.

They had, after all, been brutally treated under the dictatorship and were regarded in the late 1970s as one of the three "social partners" (along with business and government) essential to the smooth running of a consensual democracy.

This was especially true for the UGT, which was founded by the now ruling socialist party almost a century earlier. When the socialists came to power the UGT effectively did too. All socialist MPs were automatically UGT members.

Inevitably, this relationship broke down. Under prime minister Felipe Gonzalez, economic policy has drifted well to the right and annual three-way wage negotiations between the social partners became increasingly difficult to sustain and were last held six years ago.

The Government's decision to enter the EC imposed new modernising priorities on economic policy and few people were surprised when the Socialists and the UGT formally split three years ago.

It was then, on December 14,

1988, that the unions seemed to have won the upper hand by calling a highly successful one day general strike that paralysed the country.

But time has radically narrowed the union's chances of success. Firstly, it was always obvious that the 1988 strike was successful mainly because people simply decided to take the day off work rather than try to reach their offices.

Now, too, the Government has made it clear it has no intention of negotiating the convergence plan with the unions. That means they will not be able to draw Madrid into a public debate outside the Government's control (as was the case in 1988 over a youth employment scheme that triggered the strike).

It means both the UGT and the CCOO are sparring with an opponent who refuses to come out of his corner. The public is not yet outraged and the widely varying action timescales of the two leaders are a sharp contrast with the unity they developed in 1988.

The Government has been extremely clever. Without debate the public only hear the

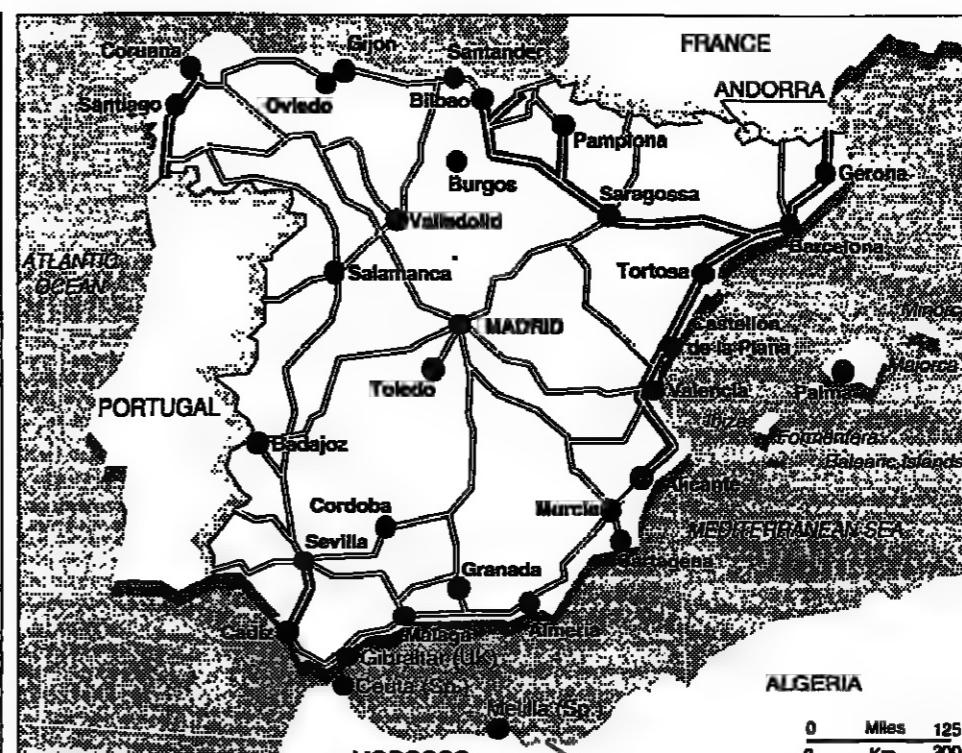
complaints of union officials. These never get on to the public television and radio channels, however, and even the biggest opposition newspaper, the conservative ABC, has been strangely muted on the issue.

That is because the conservative opposition, the Partido Popular, has, with its keen nose for opportunity, rushed to embrace the unions and promised to fight the convergence plan with them while the main business confederation, the CEOE, thinks the plan is just what Spain needs. The CEOE carries considerable clout in Andorra.

It leaves the unions with probably only one effective voice in the media, the already stridently critical newspaper *El Mundo*, to champion opposition. *El Mundo* is extremely critical about everything the Government does and it is hard to imagine how it could become noticeably more so now.

No-one in Madrid, in or out of Government, is suggesting the unions will not be able to mount loud and perhaps disruptive protests against the convergence plan but few people seem to be worried that action could be sustained for very long.

Certainly, the government seems to have built the probability of strike action into its planning of the convergence



programme but it feels it has the unions in a weak position. As any strikes will not be about pay, the public's sympathy might be harder to mobilise.

Less than 15 per cent of the Spanish workforce is unionised anyway and Madrid seems to have got away with another

divisive tactic earlier this year. This was its refusal to negotiate a difficult round of job and capacity cuts in industries owned or controlled by the state on a sectoral basis. Instead, they are being implemented on a company by company basis, robbing the unions of large platforms upon which to co-ordinate their responses.

Gradually, the Government may be winning a battle to remove the unions from the post-Franco pedestal upon which they were placed. The effort is to reduce them to mere bargaining for wages and conditions with the people who directly employ them.

Pressures for greater regional autonomy are growing stronger

The strain in Spain

RUNNING SPAIN must sometimes feel a little like drifting on a liferaft of oil drums tied together with thin string. The longer the craft stays in the water the weaker the binding becomes and the cans begin to move ominously.

Although bound by the 1978 Constitution the 17 autonomous regions that make up modern Spain are beginning to jostle about, rubbing up against each other and pressing the central government for more autonomy. The problem is not that the raft is falling apart but rather that it is costing Madrid a lot more money to keep it together.

With Spain's public sector deficit running at 4.4 per cent of GDP (opposition parties claim it is much higher) a recent OECD report on the Spanish economy surprised no-one by insisting that "one of the main causes for high deficits is expansionary policy by regional governments".

While the central government deficit has been falling since 1985, regional debt has risen from 0.8 per cent of GDP in 1985 to more than 1.6 per cent last year. The OECD accuses the regions of spending money on flashy projects and of paying their civil servants – many of whom duplicate jobs being done in Madrid – more than central government pays its own.

Frustrated by Madrid's reluctance to throw more money at them, the regions have begun to tap local and international capital markets for funds. Many are close to breaching their legal debt limits – interest payments may not be more than 25 per cent of revenues – and one, Cantabria, technically bankrupted itself last year.

The OECD calls on Madrid (in truth, OECD country reports are usually written with the assistance of the Finance Ministry concerned) to tighten up these limits and to make it clear to lenders that the State is not underwriting regional borrowing.

But that misses the crucial political point. The borrowing is just a symptom of the tre-

mendous head of regionalist political steam built up because of the federal vision held out by the 1978 Constitution. Although the complex constitutional system gives some regions – Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia and Andalucia – more autonomy more rapidly than the others, all 17 regions are basically promised the freedom, in time, to run their internal affairs.

Madrid's difficulty is that it never really rid itself of the centralist tradition inherited from Franco and is trying to grant autonomy at its pace while many of the regions run by regional parties are trying to grab, in Madrid's view, too much too quickly. It is arguable that devolved power can never create a true federation anyway and that federal states

The 17 autonomous regions are like a raft of oil drums in a heavy sea that is starting to come apart

such as Germany and the US function because the devolution went the other way – from the states to the centre.

The tension between regions and Madrid stands to reason: the policies of the regions are fundamentally nationalist, or even ethnic. It is essential to the electability of a regional party that Madrid be painted as an inadequate provider, as a distributor of Catalan taxes to Extremadura or of encouraging investment in Andalucia at the Basque Country's expense.

Much of this is game playing. But it can sound very threatening. Both Catalonia and the Basque Country are run by conservative nationalist parties whose leaders periodically say almost seditionary things. Last year, the Catalan leader observed that Catalonia was in a very similar situation to Lithuania, which was then becoming independent of the former Soviet Union. Did he mean Catalonia should be independent too?

He said no, not at all, and

then promptly began to press Madrid for more money and, to his horror, had his bluff called. In negotiations last year to redesign the financial arrangements between the regions and Madrid Catalonia began to press loudly for the right to be allowed to spend the taxes raised in Catalonia. Madrid soon shut this up by suggesting the Catalan government might like to raise these taxes itself too, as the Basque do.

This was not what the Catalans had in mind. Raising (in the sense of collecting or increasing) taxes is not a politically attractive thing to do. The Catalan Government simply wanted to spend what Madrid had collected. So the demand was quietly dropped.

But the fuse about more autonomy is not just a harmless struggle for money. Slowly but surely it is changing the face of Spanish politics as the large centralist parties weaken and the regionalists grow. It is quite possible, for instance, that the next Spanish general election (to be held between now and October next year) will force Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's socialists into a coalition with either the ruling Catalan CIU or the ruling Basque PNV. Both these parties send MPs to Madrid and the CIU is the third largest party in the House.

The large conservative opposition, the Partido Popular (PP), has also been forced to compromise. In Navarra, for instance, it has an agreement under which it supports the ruling UPN in regional elections and in turn expects the UPN vote to come to it in general elections. The PP has also formed alliances with regionalist groups in Aragon and local ones in Valencia and Seville.

At another level, regions controlled by socialist party or PP leaders are also being forced to champion regional themes with which their centralist party leaderships are uncomfortable. In socialist Andalucia, for example, the regional government fights constant skirmishes with Madrid over health policy. Andalucia

is one of the few regions with its own health service and claims Madrid, in order to save money, constantly delays making budgeted transfers to Seville which, in turn, borrows money in the capital markets to make up shortfalls and thus infuriates Madrid.

Meanwhile, Galicia, which the PP controls through its maverick founder, the former Francista minister Manuel Fraga, is leading a sudden charge to redesign totally the way the historic autonomies – Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia – are run. He has called for the creation of a single administration in each territory, meaning that centrally appointed civil governors and other officials would be withdrawn. Madrid would thus delegate all its powers – including control of the police – to the leader in these regions.

It just happens that the socialists control none of the three historic autonomies (though they are the junior coalition partner in the Basque Country) and the idea therefore is unlikely to get very far now. But Catalonia's leadership likes it and single administration may yet make headway if the Catalan CIU is able to force the socialists into a coalition after the next national election.

For the CIU and the Basque PNV, the need to be seen to be making progress on questions of autonomy (even if it is sometimes illusory) is critical because they are constantly being chased in their own backyards by smaller parties which genuinely want independence for their regions and not just more national resources.

This is even beginning now in Aragon and while Basque separatists regularly take about 15 per cent of the Basque vote there has been a sharp increase in support recently for the separatist Catalan party ERC. That is a direct result of the Catalan leader, Mr Jordi Pujol, exciting nationalist fervour, and backing off. Whenever he does this he leaves a separatist residue for the ERC to pick up.

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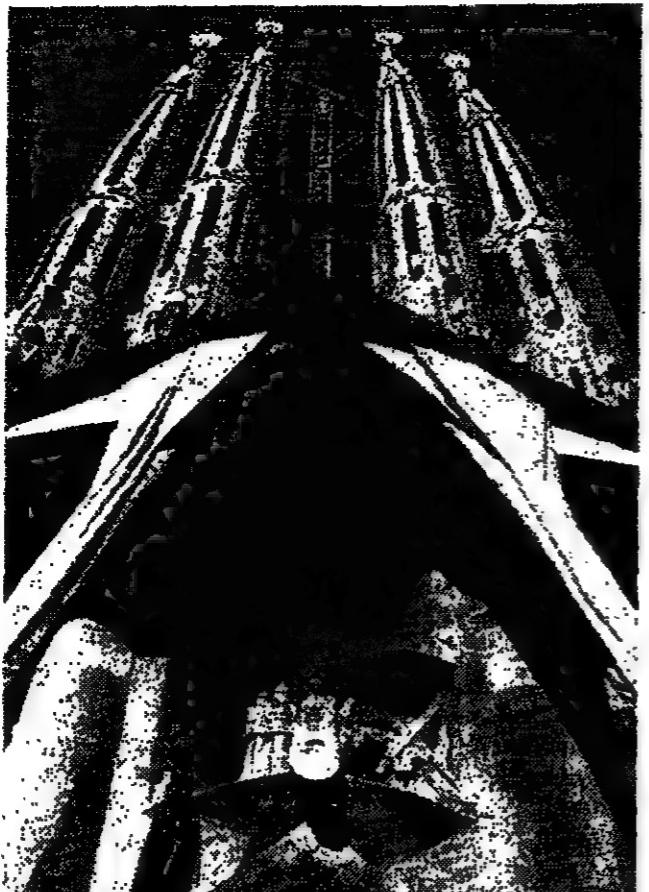
IT WOULD not be the Olympic Games without a last minute panic and Barcelona's panic has, not surprisingly, been about accommodation. In spite of spending some \$1.5bn on creating housing for athletes, umpires and the media for this summer's Games, the sudden creation of new nations in Eastern Europe and the re-entry to the Olympics of South Africa has sent officials scurrying for available apartments and hotels.

There will not be many, even though many locals will probably leave town for the duration of the Games to watch them from some cool Balearic island on the television. When they come back, though, what a treat awaits them.

The build-up to the Games will have seen some \$3.5bn of public and private capital pumped in to Barcelona. The city, already an impressive architectural monument to the modernist genius of its early 20th century fathers, has become arguably the most modern city on the Mediterranean. Just for a start, a \$2bn new beltway system will probably take about 20 per cent of traffic off Barcelona's choking streets and help ease the city's most chronic problem.

But, says Enric Trudo, the city councillor who has prepared the Catalan capital for the Games, they mean much more than revitalising a sagging infrastructure. "We want these Games to be different," he says. "We want them to show not just that we are hospitable and warm but also to break the notion that we are chaotic and lazy."

Rather like Seville and its Expo '92 further south, Barcelona and Catalonia have approached the Games as a unique opportunity to show themselves off to visitors and particularly visitors who might one day become investors. The region may be Spain's most economically robust but it is being challenged for that leadership by Madrid and sees the \$10bn pumped in to Andalucia



Barcelona's modern cathedral: work of genius

Homage to Catalonia

and Seville for the Expo as a threat.

Catalonia and Barcelona are to Spain what Baden-Württemberg and Stuttgart are to Germany - places were things, including the people, work best of all. Even in early April, guides were telling visitors to the Olympic city that everything was practically ready for the Games while in Seville, the

Expo was forced to open with half a dozen of its pavilions still under construction and access to the site still partly blocked by construction. The Catalans will move heaven and earth not to be cast in the same mould when the 11,000 journalists and media technicians begin to pour into Barcelona in July.

They will probably get it

2.5 per cent against its partner currencies would be immense and politically dangerous. The government's best, it seems, would be to ride out the union protests against its benefit cuts. Spaniards may react badly to too much disruption and people are aware that the economy is delicate. If this works to the Government's favour an early election is pos-

sible. In order to avoid a clash with Expo, however (it ends on October 12), this might mean going to the polls in winter, which might not be popular.

One thing not in doubt - barring disaster - is that Mr González will be Prime Minister before and after that election and the only remaining question is how long he will then want to carry on.

Time for reckoning

Continued from page 1
obvious world economic upturn guaranteed to help him, he has to find a way of animating the economy, or at least disguising the bad news, without heating it up again. It is impossible to second

guess the Government, but it seems unlikely Madrid will try to enter the narrow band of the European Monetary System's exchange rate mechanism before an election. The fiscal sacrifice required to hold the peseta to a fluctuation of just

right, but one wonders what Barcelona will be like after the Games are over. It is a strange city, desperately trying to free its life away from embarrassing, crude, Spain. It has become precious and sort of untouchable, like an exhibit.

Its citizens chitter to speak Catalan to each other, using up mental capacity on a language no-one else will ever bother to learn but which is not quite obscure enough (like Basque) to guarantee the exoticism Catalonia so craves.

A city famous for its artists and architects has decided once again that it should be the design centre of Spain but has never made the link between form and function central to all good design and which the modernists were true to.

Nowadays everything, from paper cups to public walkways, is designed and overdesigned. It would be nice if something spontaneous or ordinary happened.

The Olympics will, no doubt, test Barcelona's capacity to improvise. The city tried unsuccessfully to host Olympics in 1924, 1936 and 1972 and now the new hotels, oversize airport, beltways, subways and railway stations the Games have brought are bound to increase the city's confidence. They may even calm the twitch that drives Barcelonians to try constantly to be different.

One thing will definitely help Barcelona to mellow. After decades of trying to pretend it was nowhere near the Mediterranean by building factories between the centre of town and the water, the Olympics have given the city back its beach, about five kilometres of it just in front of the \$1bn Olympic village and its flashy new marina.

When the locals come back to town after the Games, the beach is where they will probably go. It will be hot and probably a good time to switch off Gaudi and Dali and Picasso and get in some serious tanning.

A no-nonsense A-Z guide for the businessperson in Spain

Start at El Aeropuerto

BUSINESS GUIDES, especially to Latin countries, tend to be frivolous affairs full of advice about how to mix business with pleasure. Spain, though, is a serious place so here are some utterly unfrivolous tips for the visiting or nearly resident executive.

■ **Aeropuerto**. Madrid's is, unfortunately, unavoidable. The most most exciting thing in it is the local chamber of commerce bookshop. Local flights only land at the international terminal, making finding your car very tricky.

Barcelona, though, is a serious place full of surprises but they are so big that from 1988 onwards will probably be three-quarters cordoned off.

■ **La Banca** and **Barcelona**.

The banks in Spain look modern but aren't. They take days (sometimes weeks) to transfer your money, charge you for cashing cheques if the branch isn't yours (even if it's the same bank) and will almost never put the customer first.

Avoid them if possible. As for Barcelona, it has pretty buildings and prickly people - and is losing out in business importance to Madrid.

■ **Conductores y la corrupcion**.

This is different and corruption to you. Watch out for both. Spaniards kill themselves at an amazing rate in cars and then blame the Government for building bad roads. Actually, they just drive like hoodlums. Flying is safer and Iberia is a terrific airline. Corruption is serious although the central administration is probably straight. Locally, it gets bad.

■ **Discos y la droga**. Discos and drugs. Possession of any drug is legal. If you have children, they'll be seeing a lot of both. Also, Spaniards love noise and love discs. Most discs have children's hours, when 12 year olds can get their noise fixes without getting drunk. Then they fill up with the auditors and merchant bankers in charge of your \$1bn investment.

■ **Espana and Eppo 92**. Since the country is run by Andalucians it has become fashionable to speak with a southern accent. So drop your S's and X's, learn to enjoy dry sherry (manzanilla for the very

deserving), cigarettes and bullfighting. Being churchish about bulls/bullfighting will make you no friends.

■ **Francia**. If you represent a French state company, the Spanish authorities would like to thank you for your interest in their state owned wool/artificial limb/briefcase/handbag/propeller/ceramic lampshade enterprise but are very sorry. No. You own a great deal of Spain already and you make the industry Ministry very nervous.

■ **Gonzalez, Felipe**. Despite trying very hard to get himself sacked lately, Spaniards have decided to punish him for being so conservative by making him prime minister for another year.

■ **La Obsequio**. Gifts. Pay close attention to this. Spanish companies give lots of these to business journalists, most of which are unfortunately too valuable to give back. Mainly wine and watches and fax machines and wine and CD players and wine. Government officials have come to expect a little more from business.

■ **Inflation?** Stay in the hotel you stayed in last year.

■ **Jabugo** cured ham. This is what your Spanish hosts will ply you with to break down your resistance to the outrageous amount of money they want for their pickle factory, it always works. One plate of this stuff will make you want to live near a supply forever.

■ **Konzelos** send a monthly magazine to Spain doesn't have a K entry but then it isn't sold in kiosks along with your newspaper, tobacco, bus tickets and pools. Kiosks are a great idea but they're always closed when you need one.

■ **Lunch** (Almuñerzo): 2.30pm to 5.30pm at least. Best avoided if you've got work to do. Aperitif with snacks, wine, starter, wine, main course, "more wine", sweets, coffee, liquors. All faced with swirls of cigar and cigarette smoke. You leave the restaurant and feel like Dracula as the sun (surprisingly still there) blinds you and, on average, in Madrid, about \$10 poorer for two.

■ **Madrid**. A great place to do business if you've got a good local lawyer. Mostly very

clean, well run, keen to please. Try to get your work done in the mornings. Post-lunch comprehension close to zero.

Claims to be Cultural Capital of Europe this year but many museums and monuments still boarded up for renovation.

■ **Newspapers**. If you read Spanish stick to *El País* and *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona) for good general, international and business news. *Expansion* for whatever the Finance Ministry is thinking. *La Gaceta* sometimes surprisingly fast with business news. The rest of the nationals are axe-grinders. On most days the FT is in Madrid kiosks at 8.30am.

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■ **Past nothing!** Franco made every letter posted in Spain pass through Madrid where he could read it. Things have not changed much. The postal service is renowned for hiding a surprising backlog of about 5m items at any one time. Use a messenger service but don't let the blighters use your phone when they arrive. That's to get the next job and it means your message just delayed.

■ **Post office** (Correos): to a fax and a cheque (to check up on) and *zigzaguer* (to zig-zag) but for the most part you have to be able to *defender* yourself in Spanish.

■ **"Que?"** (Huh? What?) is something you'll be hearing and saying a lot as you and your local business partners talk past each other. Don't bother with pardon me and all that. A straight "What" is fine. Spaniards speak Castilian far too quickly. Latin Americans may explain why they produce the best Spanish literature.

■ **Riqueza** (wealth). It's hard to tell who has money and who doesn't in Madrid. Husbands will forgive family medical insurance for a Rolex. Wives have to have a fur. But few rich Spaniards drive lousy cars.

■ **Sevilla**. Expo '92 there this year so not much work is being done. Spaniards like to think they like Seville but mostly

they're scared of its clichéness. The British are acceptable because the local aristocracy likes to show off in English learned from nannies. Very hot, quite good fun but, ultimately, provincial.

■ **Theatre**. There is some very good opera and traditional performance theatre in Madrid and Barcelona. One Problem: you can't go. Tickets are hard to get unless you queue at the right window for the half an hour on whatever afternoon they are on sale. Good concert seats always go to friends and family of the official body sponsoring it. A good hotel can fix most things, though.

■ **Understanding**. Make sure you understand what is being said to you. This is not London or New York. It isn't even Milan. "Yes" must do business, "no" does not mean it is done. It means, er... who knows what it means. Keep that very close by.

■ **Vino**. Totally undiscovered by the battalions of FT wine writers but thriving nonetheless. Spanish wines are as rich and rough and subtle as anyone could ever want them to be. Hardly any good ones yet exposed.

■ **"W"**: Seven entries in my dictionary. One of them is *Windsurfer* (windsurfer). But Spanish is anglicising very slowly. There's *fazzer* (to send a fax) and *chequer* (to check up on) and *zigzaguer* (to zig-zag) but for the most part you have to be able to *defender* yourself in Spanish.

■ **"X"**: As in X-rated. Catholic Spain is one of Europe's most sexually active societies. Newspapers carry pages of "relax" ads. Supermarket-sized peep shows popping out all over Madrid.

■ **Yanquis** come back! Young Spaniards tried hard to dislike America after Franco died but have failed horribly. Even George Bush is popular here.

■ **Zimbabwe, Zambia and Zimbabwe**. This is the foreign policy part. Spaniards steer clear of Africa and Asia. They're scared of the food, the water, the animals and not being able to speak to in English by the locals.

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| W Mercado | 4% | 3% | 592 564 -5% |
| W El Economista | n/a | 2% | n/a 350 |
| W Tribuna | n/a | 1% | n/a 137 |
| D Diario 16 | 1% | 1% | 153 125 -18% |
| W Tiempo | 2% | 1% | 237 89 -62% |
| W Cambio 16 | 3% | 1% | 396 46 -88% |

*Source: European Business Readership Survey 1991.

n/a = Not Asked

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ECONOMY

Ascent to Europe gets tougher

ALONG with most of its European Community partners, Spain has prepared a plan ahead of the Lisbon summit at the end of the Portuguese presidency showing how it proposes to converge its economy towards the targets set by EC heads of Government in Maastricht last December.

Unlike the rest of its partners, Spain is making a very big deal of its convergence plan.

To the finance ministry, finally given the freedom by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to deliver some well-aimed hammer blows at an inflationary service sector, the plan is a once in a lifetime opportunity. To the unions, it has rapidly become the sum of all fears.

This is largely because the

The finance minister's hammer blows at inflationary practices have flabbergasted the trade unions

Finance Minister, Mr Carlos Solchaga, has refused to confine the plan merely to meeting the Maastricht targets.

Rather, the essence of his plan is not nominal, but what he calls real, convergence entailing, in other words, measures Spain would have to take in order to compete in an open market even if the EC did not exist.

These measures come at the end of a 46 page outline plan published in April and, naturally for a ministry which knows it is about to stir up a hornet's nest, some of the writing is vague.

It is, however, easy to cut through the fog.

• "Reinforcing the job-seeking process", says the most important heading. This quickly boiled down to two points. First, Mr Solchaga was going to cut back on unemployment benefits and, second, double the amount of time required in work in order to qualify for the reduced benefit.

In addition, an unemployed worker receiving benefit would have to take the first job on offer or have the benefit stopped.

For a socialist government even to contemplate such an attack on one of the citadels of the welfare state has flabbergasted the unions, who are now threatening fierce retaliation.

Mr Solchaga's response is simple. The unions were offered an opportunity to sign a three year wages pact last year and refused. And Spain's 14.5 per cent rate of unemployment is a sham and everyone knows it. At least a third of the unemployed work in the black economy and the system of paying incentives to industry to create jobs is being terribly abused.

• "Economic deregulation measures", says the next sub heading. The text blandly adds that "a good number of sectors which in the recent past have been inflationary have justified this by pointing to the existence of a collection of regulations

Scarcity about these fig-

ures is met with an indulgent smile at the ministry. As long as Spain grows more than the EC average, everything will be fine, comes the answer. If the years since Spain joined the EC are any guide, then this is feasible, but the boom generated by adhesion is over.

Clearly, then, the Spanish are banking on their ability to hold their EC partners to a promise, made at Maastricht, to create a cohesion fund to increase financing to poorer Community members who demonstrate that they are making a determined effort to bring inefficiencies out of their economies.

The "real" convergence proposals are designed to show Madrid's partners that it is doing just that and that it is not simply coming to the table to beg for more.

But without the cohesion money Spain hoped would be forthcoming, its convergence plan begins to look extremely ambiguous and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez is going to have to use all the charm he can muster to squeeze it out of his European community friends.

Fortunately, Spain has until the beginning of 1997 (the earliest date set for EMU) to bring its macroeconomic house into order. This is easily achievable even though, as officials admit, the plan sets out to define the economy while making it grow at least 1 per cent above the EC average every year for the next five.

The targets are nevertheless impressive. Total public debt will fall from 4.4 per cent of GDP now to 1 per cent by the end of 1998. The economy will grow 3 per cent this year (a wildly optimistic projection, many economists suggest) and still be growing 3.5 per cent by the beginning of 1997. Unit labour costs will be growing at 2.8 per cent by the end of 1996 compared with 6.3 per cent at the end of last year and the deficit in the current account of the balance of payments will have fallen from nearly 3 per cent of GDP last year to 2.3 per cent.

At the moment, signals from

Spain are that the

targets are not yet being met. The money markets have been streamlined but ordinary bank customers have not yet benefited.

Officials say the nominal convergence detailed in the plan is of minor importance, though this is probably bravo.

• Credit and insurance entities" announces the next heading.

Although Spain's financial markets have been greatly streamlined and liberalised in the past few years, "the priority now is to accelerate the transfer of the benefits of this greater economic freedom and competition to the customer". Anyone who has had to wait three weeks for a Spanish bank to move an international cash transfer from its foreign department to a usable current account will know what this is about. The government also plans to draft new laws forcing insurers to do away with small print clauses which often impose absurd conditions on possible claimants.

• "Public companies" is a bland enough introduction to another nightmare for the

ministries. The

monopolies wherever they exist and the Government is about to grant new mobile operating licences to private bidders.

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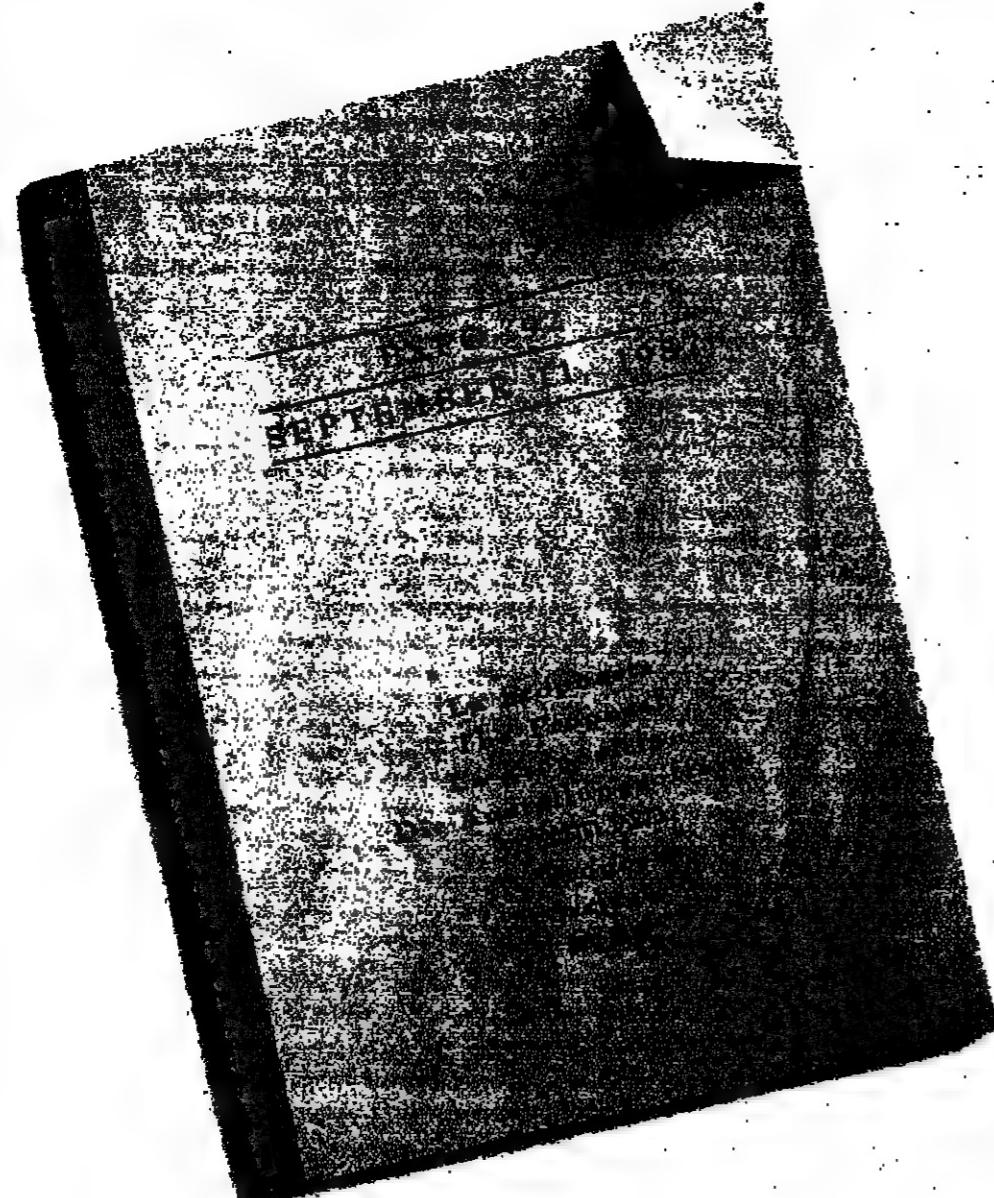
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FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

SINGAPORE

Monday June 1 1992

**The economy: Breaking
a high-energy
diet is not easy: Page 2**

**Politics: Keeping their
country ahead in the
race of nations: Page 3**

SECTION IV

Singapore has become not only a regional economic power but also a country poised to jump into the very top league of industrialised countries. But behind the image of achievement and efficiency there are problems. Kieran Cooke reports

Victim of its own success

SINGAPORE is short of labour. It is short of land. But it is not short of statistics.

Officials quickly deluge the visitor with sets of figures to illustrate that the island republic, only 573 sq km in area and with a population of less than 3m, has become not only a regional economic power but also a country poised to jump into the top league of industrialised countries.

GNP per capita is second only to Japan in Asia. The economy grew by 6.7 per cent last year and is forecast to grow – even in the midst of a recession – in key western export markets – by between 4 per cent and 6 per cent this year. Singapore's trade is 3% times GDP. It has no foreign debts and official foreign reserves of \$35bn.

Singapore is the world's biggest container port and the third-biggest oil refining centre. It is at the cutting edge of technology in the electronics, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals industries. It produces more than half the world's computer disc drives. It is a regional centre for the shipbuilding industry. Each year more than 5m tourists arrive in Singapore.

More than 3,000 foreign companies have set up operations in Singapore. There is full employment and more than 70 per cent of the population own their own apartments or houses. The city state prides

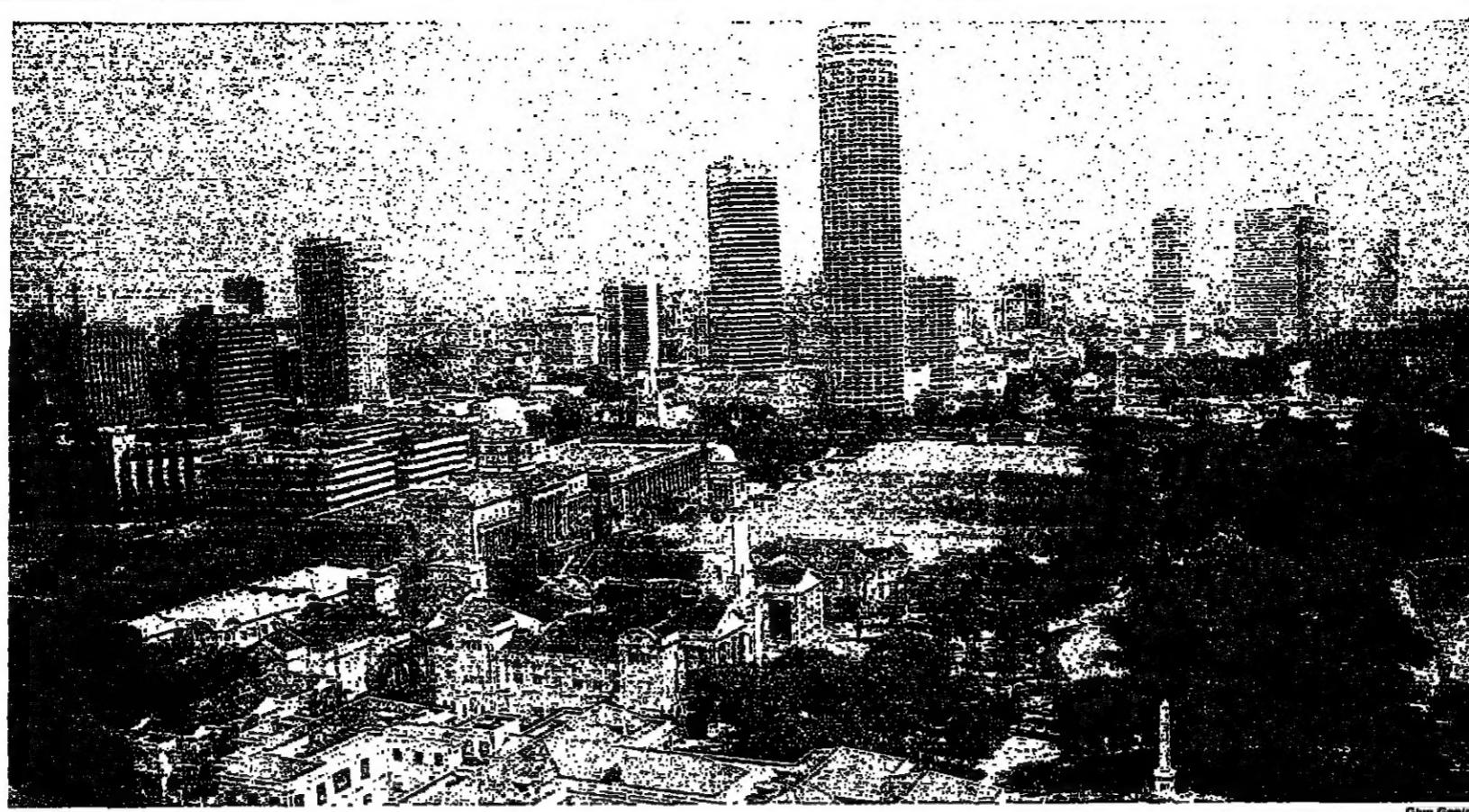
itself on its clean and green image. Most of all it is proud of its efficiency.

All this in a city which in 1960 was described by a travel magazine writer as being a cesspool of squalor and degradation. "The Chinese, who constitute the main current of the city, live in utter filth and poverty" the writer noted. "Their poverty is phenomenal. One must see with his own eyes to believe it."

There have been changes no less phenomenal over the years. But part the carefully washed and ironed curtains of Singapore achievement and efficiency and there are problems.

Mr Goh Chok Tong took over as prime minister from Mr Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's leader for more than 30 years, in late 1990. The baton change has not been an entirely smooth one. Mr Goh has found it difficult to escape from the shadow of Mr Lee. Brigadier-General Lee Hsien Loong, Mr Lee's son who is crafted in his father's tough, no-nonsense image, exercises considerable influence as first deputy prime minister.

The ruling People's Action Party (PAP), still headed by Mr Lee, performed badly in a general election last August. There are indications that portions of the Chinese working class, once solidly behind the PAP, feel they have missed out on Singapore's economic miracle. There are now four opposi-



Singapore: Economic planners have shown dexterity in anticipating changes in the global market. Skills have constantly been upgraded, industries have diversified

tion members in the 81-seat parliament – a shocking state of affairs for a government that has traditionally been loath to listen to any opposing voice.

Singapore remains one of the world's most regulated societies. Its politics, the way its government exercises control over virtually every aspect of life, is often likened to the now defunct communist regimes of eastern Europe. The difference is that Singapore works, remains staunchly anti-communist and has been able to give many of its citizens financial rewards only dreamt about in eastern Europe.

But the country has become a victim of its own success. Singapore's new leadership says it is now encouraging people to make their own decisions and do more for themselves. Many of Singapore's companies – capital rich and with little room to expand at home – have been pampered

and in fact in every sphere of a Singaporean's life" says the prime minister.

"In recent years we have been trying to shrink the presence of the government... you can see there is uncertainty in people's minds. They want the government to be there as a safety net or a guiding hand or to do things for them... we are at this stage of development."

One of the preoccupations of Mr Lee during his last years in power was that Singaporeans, spoilt by success and an excess of consumer goods, were going "soft". Some managers complain that it is difficult to find staff to take responsibility: too much control has bred a generation who pass decisions upwards rather than take responsibility themselves. Many of Singapore's companies – capital rich and with little room to expand at home – have been pampered

by government support and still have to learn to compete internationally.

Singapore aspires to becoming a regional communications hub – what its futuristic planners describe as a "global city". But the island republic remains a rather inward-looking society. Its leaders do not take kindly to criticism from outside. The local media is exceptionally mild mannered while foreign publications find it difficult to operate under various government restrictions.

The government stresses that Singapore is an Asian or Oriental society. It remains suspicious of what it considers to be western influences such as pornography and divorce. Yet marital breakdown is an everyday reality and divorce rates have doubled over the past 10 years. When film censorship was recently relaxed

people flocked to see a series of mildly pornographic films – not from the west but Chinese films made in Hong Kong.

In the broader regional sphere, Singapore emphasises the interdependence of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Says the first deputy prime minister: "Our interest is... in making ASEAN a stronger raft to attach ourselves to."

It seems Singapore feels that raft is still not entirely stable. It guards itself against the effects of any regional conflicts by maintaining a highly sophisticated and well-armed military machine. "We should be like the poison shrimp, with bright colours to warn others of the poison we carry," says a government policy handbook.

Singapore's economic planners have shown considerable dexterity over the years in anticipating changes in the

global market. Skills have constantly been upgraded, industries have diversified. Ten years ago, financial services accounted for only 7 per cent of GDP. According to the Monetary Authority of Singapore that figure is now 17 per cent.

Singapore's centralised planning and the efficiency of its system has made Singapore top of the league with many multinational investors.

But economic success has bred serious labour shortages. Singapore has had to import upwards of a 250,000 foreign workers to work mostly in the lower-paid sector.

"Job hopping" has become commonplace, particularly in the electronics sector. Recently, the government disclosed that \$1bn of taxes remained uncollected – due to a chronic shortage of tax officers.

Home-based skills are not

plentiful enough to fill demand. More automation has been one response, but labour shortages could continue to be a constraint on growth in the years ahead.

Another constraint is land: Singapore is literally running out of space. It is therefore giving very energetic backing and financial aid to the development of nearby Batam island in Indonesia.

Mr Richard Hu, Singapore's finance minister, feels the economy has now entered a more mature phase of lower but more sustainable growth.

"We are comfortable with a pause," says Mr Hu. "We have been growing too fast over the past three or four years."

But rising wages at home and greater competition from other countries in the region pose a problem.

"We are not only competing now against the likes of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea but moving very fast up the ladder are Thailand and Malaysia," says Mr Hu.

"More worrying in the long term is the south China area – it is beginning to nibble at the lower levels of our exports. We have to move upstream as quickly as possible."

Singapore's leaders pride themselves on their vision. They have identified many of the problems that lay ahead.

Even the more pessimistic government forecasts plan on annual economic growth of well over 5 per cent over the next three years, rising to more than six per cent annually thereafter.

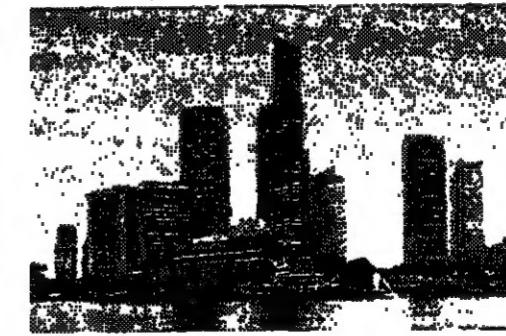
By an unspecified "Year X" Singapore plans to increase its area by 17 per cent through reclamation and landfill.

To cope with labour shortages and the effects of an ageing population, bigger families are encouraged, particularly among the more educated.

Sceptics might question some of Singapore's aims. But its leaders are determined. The prime minister says Mr Lee Kuan Yew taught him never to be afraid to go against the conventional wisdom.

"People may laugh, they may snigger," says Mr Goh. "But we must carry on. We know our plans can be effective."

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SINGAPORE 2

□ THE ECONOMY

Breaking a high-energy diet is not easy

MANY Singaporeans, led by nervous stock market speculators, have become more gloomy this year about the country's economy than the economic fundamentals themselves appear to warrant.

They justify their fears by recalling the recession of 1985 and 1986, by reminding themselves of Singapore's dependence on a slow-moving world economy, and by pointing to the government's latest (and reduced) forecast for growth of between 4 per cent and 6 per cent this year, compared with 6.7 per cent last year and 8.3 per cent in 1990.

This sense of foreboding is

economy matures. "There were clear signs that we had been growing too fast; quite clearly signs that we were overheating," he told the Financial Times in an interview.

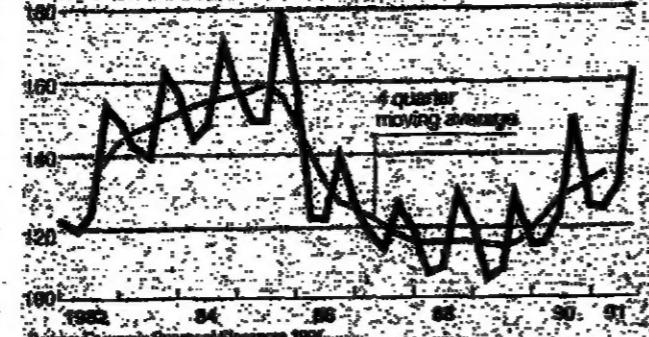
"We have been looking to get away from an 8-10 per cent growth diet to 5-6 per cent growth," he said. "But breaking a high-energy diet is not easy. Manufacturers and others get used to it."

Not everyone is going on a diet anyway. Motorola's plant, for example, has been working seven days a week making papers and other data products to supply a rapidly-expanding Asian market and to meet North American demand which is still growing at 5.7 per cent a year.

Singapore's strategy of marketing itself as a regional service hub focusing on advanced electronics, aerospace and other high-technology industries, and farming out labour-intensive work to neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, shows no sign of faltering. More than 3,000 multinational companies, attracted by the efficiency of the port, the airport, the telecommunications

Relative unit labour costs

In manufacturing sector of the other newly-industrialised economies (1980-1990)



network and the rest of the island's infrastructure, have invested in Singapore, and the government hopes to attract more from Hong Kong with the approach of Chinese rule there.

Motorola is considering making Singapore its regional headquarters and farming out labour-intensive work to neighbouring countries such as Indonesia.

The designs are becoming more sophisticated. The manufacturing process is becoming highly automated. The people who need to work in the factory must be of higher and



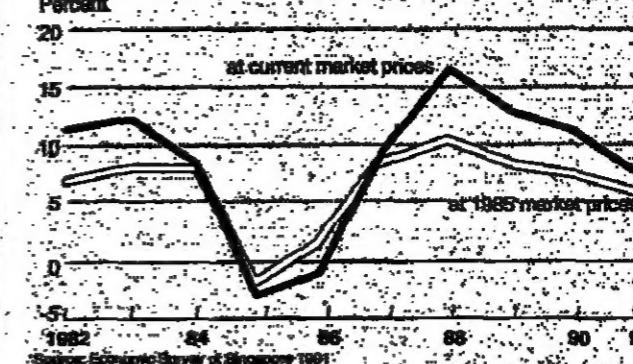
Finance minister Richard Hu: concerned about labour costs

higher educational levels all the time. Technical support must be better."

With its well-planned infrastructure and increasing technological sophistication, Singapore is ahead of its partners in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) such as Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. But the government is still concerned about Singapore's competitiveness relative to the other newly-industrialised economies (NIEs) — Taiwan, South Korea and

Changes in Gross Domestic Product

Percent



Source: Economic Survey of Singapore 1991

Hong Kong. Unemployment remains minimal in Singapore, and real wage growth amounted to 7.6 per cent in 1991, while labour productivity grew by only 1.5 per cent.

"This marks the third year in a row where real wage growth has exceeded productivity gains," Mr Hu said in his budget speech, noting with concern that the country's unit labour costs in manufacturing rose by 7.5 per cent compared to the other NIEs. "This brings our relative competitiveness

position to that in 1982 and 1983," he said.

Although the strength of the Singapore dollar is partly to blame, the government is anxious to ensure that its workforce remains competitive and has increased funding for education and training, and attempted to encourage foreign companies to set up research and development groups in Singapore.

Singapore has made its name by planning economic development with ruthless efficiency

from the centre and by encouraging foreign companies to invest in the island. But small companies complain that they have been ignored in favour of the big multinationals, and Singaporeans are afraid that over-regulation and prosperity have deprived them of the sort of entrepreneurs for which Hong Kong is famous.

The cautionary characteristic of Singaporean business has blunted the government's attempts to persuade local businesses to invest surplus capital abroad, although Singapore traders and investors have started to make inroads in Cambodia and Vietnam.

For the energetic Mr Philip Yeo, chairman of the Economic Development Board, Singapore has simply become a victim of its own success.

"The more you educate a man the more risk-averse he is," he says, suggesting that the best way to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit is to train too many people or to bring them into the country from outside.

"If PAs have no job they start doing something. Entrepreneurship comes from adversity," says Mr Yeo. "So long as we have full employment in Singapore, there's no entrepreneurship... That's the disadvantage of Singapore. We've done too good a job."

Victor Mallet

□ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

A computer-driven future

WITH characteristic determination and meticulous planning, Singapore has seized on the computer as a driving force for its future economic development.

The government believes that advanced information technology should be applied in liberal doses to everything from education and domestic road traffic control to international trade, both to improve efficiency within Singapore and to enhance the island's role as a commercial and service hub for south-east Asia.

A shortage of skilled workers has given an added impetus to the computerisation strategy. While the Economic Development Board seeks to attract high-technology hardware and research and develop-

ment business to the country, the National Computer Board (NCB) is charged with promoting the use of computers, introducing labour-saving software and linking parts of the public and private sectors into computer networks.

The success of the three-year-old, \$230m TradeNet system for dealing with trade documentation — one of those ideas which is blindingly obvious once it comes into being — has encouraged the development of other networks along similar lines.

Some countries would have been well satisfied with Singapore's previous ability to process customs and trade documentation in a day or two, but TradeNet went further. By linking the 20 relevant govern-

ment departments with 2,500 importers, shippers and other private-sector companies, the system has cut approval times to as little as 15 minutes.

About 95 per cent of trade documentation is now processed in this paperless network, saving the time and money once spent on messengers' journeys from one government office to another. In some routine cases, no human intervention is required as the various official approvals are collected by computer and delivered to the applicant. DEL, meanwhile, has established a time-saving link with Singapore customs — allowing customs officers to access the company's electronic manifest and pre-select items for inspection or payment of duty.

The next step is to link TradeNet internationally, and Singapore is already discussing the issue with US customs. "Imports and exports are extremely information-intensive, and this is critical for us as an international trading centre," says Mr Ko Kheng Hwa, NCB general manager, recalling that trade amounts to more than three times the country's gross national product. "We can further improve our competitiveness if we make the trading system more efficient."

The NCB has also encouraged the use of "expert systems" to manage ship movements and cargo handling at Singapore's busy container terminals, reducing turnaround times and freeing

skilled workers for other tasks. Another of the attractions of Singapore for multinational companies is the efficiency of its domestic services and its infrastructure and here, too, computerisation is making its mark.

Within five years, the government hopes to implement a flexible road-pricing system whereby drivers would be charged for using busy roads by passing an electronic toll gate — without stopping or slowing down. In the immediate future, Singaporeans should be able to bid for car permits (vehicle imports are restricted to prevent congestion) by using existing automated bank teller machines in the street.

TradeNet has been followed by MediNet, allowing most Singaporeans to receive approval for medical benefits within hours rather than days. LawNet, allowing the rapid transfer of legal documents and information about the court, is due to follow.

The NCB manages civil service computer operations and says it has reduced the required number of civil servants by more than 5,000 by pooling information and improving efficiency. Data about land usage, for example, is already centralised and the country's schools are linked

through the Education Ministry headquarters. An official audit showed that there were returns of \$82.71 for every dollar spent on information technology. Ultimately, NCB officials aim to provide citizens with a "one-stop, non-stop government service" for routine documentary requirements.

Information technology industry revenue

Singapore \$ billion

Doubling average annual growth 30%

Source: National Computer Board

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PROFILE

Further expansion possible for Glaxo

IF YOU are one of the millions of people round the world who suffer from peptic ulcers then there is a good chance that the treatment you take is manufactured in Singapore.

Zantac, the ulcer treatment tablet made by the UK pharmaceutical giant Glaxo, has an estimated 40 per cent of the world market for such drugs. Glaxo describes Zantac as the world's best-selling medicine, with sales of £1.6bn in the year to June 1991. Singapore produces the ingredients for more than 70 per cent of Zantac's worldwide sales.

Glaxo has been in Singapore since the late 1940s but has only been manufacturing in the island republic since the early 80s. The specialist ingredients for Zantac arrive in Singapore by ship from Europe and are then manufactured into powder form at Glaxo's plant in the Jurong industrial estate before being air freighted out in drums and made up into tablets, packaged and distributed in the various markets around the world.

"Back in the late 70s, Glaxo decided to go global and Singapore was chosen as the best location for manufacturing," says Dr Alan Catterall, managing director of Glaxo's Singapore operations. The success of the Singapore plant is due to success of Zantac. Nearly 50 per cent of Glaxo's total sales now come from Zantac.

The highly-automated Singapore plant started operations with 120 workers; there are now 300. A new plant is being built on an adjacent site which will employ an additional 170 workers to manufacture the active ingredients for a new range of drugs.

The efficiency of operations at Singapore's docks are essential for the smooth running of the Glaxo plant. The expansion of Singapore's Changi airport and the good connections available are also key factors determining Glaxo's expansion in the island republic.

But like many companies in Singapore, Glaxo now finds it difficult to recruit workers. "The labour market is very tight," says Dr Catterall. "We are now having to look around the region for skilled people, or recruit them from Europe."

Glaxo feels these staff problems will be overcome and does not rule out further expansion plans: "It's things like the support services that are available here that make the difference," says Dr Catterall. "If one of our highly complex machines breaks down, someone will be out here to fix it in under half an hour. Elsewhere in the world, it might take 24 hours and valuable production time would be lost."

Kieran Cooke

Challenges for the prime minister

In an interview, Mr Goh Chok Tong, Singapore's prime minister, talked about some of the challenges he faces and the changes he is trying to bring about in Singapore society.

On the legacy of Lee Kuan Yew: "Mr Lee was of course exceptional. His personality was such that he was totally dominant. In my case it's different... I'm not Mr Lee so I do things my way which is more low key, a lower profile kind of leadership."

Singapore society: "We recognise the government has an overwhelming presence in the economy and in fact in every sphere of a Singaporean's life. So in recent years we have been trying to shrink the presence of the government... you can see there is uncertainty in people's minds. They want the government to be there as a safety net, or a guiding hand or to do things for them."

"At the same time they also dislike the presence of the government in their daily lives. We want to get people to move out on their own and do more for themselves. They want it but are not sure that they can succeed. We are at this stage of development."

The results of the last election: "Few people would quarrel with the idea of a more open style of government and more participation by the people provided at the end of the day the government is decisive..."

"But their real concern is Are costs going up? Are they going to do better? Will their children have a good education? Are they making out on economic progress? That's the signal of the way people voted."

Singapore's military: "To be able to defend ourselves in one day of battle we require many years to build up an army... I always imagine Singapore to be a very small state which any adventurer could grab with one hand. Either you arm yourself to the extent that you can deter any threat or you don't do so at all - it's not worth spending the money."

The future: "I myself prefer a more ordered, harmonious society, a society that is regulated. At the same time we should, where we can, give people more choice - on schools, on health, on arts, on culture. "We are now at a stage when we are trying to have new out of bounds markers, when we are trying to widen the fairways... but it's an area where we would rather be cautious than adventurous."

Kieran Cooke



Lee Kuan Yew (right) with his successor, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, in November 1990

 POLITICS

A softer approach

SINGAPORE'S leaders describe themselves as a team determined to keep their country ahead "in the race of nations".

In late 1990, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, in power for more than 30 years, handed the baton of office over to Mr Goh Chok Tong. Mr Goh called on Singaporeans to support a new generation of leaders who would build a fit, cultured but rugged society. "Together", said Mr Goh, "we will run the next lap."

During his first months in power, Mr Goh sought to establish his own style of leadership. The stern, authoritarian approach of Mr Lee would be replaced by a softer style: Mr Goh talked of being more accommodating and of the need to build a consensus.

There were some small signals of change. Rules prohibiting nude scenes in films were relaxed. Some mild satire of Singapore's leaders was allowed - including the sale of a book of cartoons entitled "Hello Chok Tong, Goodbye Kuan Yew". The press indulged in some slight criticism of government policies.

Last August, Mr Goh called an election - to establish his leadership credentials at the polls and also to win backing for his new more open style of government. The results were not good for either Mr Goh or the People's Action Party, in power since Singapore's independence. The PAP's vote shrank to 61 per cent - the lowest the party had polled since 1963. The two opposition parties, the Singapore Democratic Party and the Workers' Party, won four seats, compared with only one at the last election in 1988.

The election results sent shock waves through a governing team that has always viewed any opposition or dissent with acute suspicion. Some members of the government interpreted the results as a sign that the conservative

Singaporean electorate was not in favour of Mr Goh's more open way of doing things. On the other hand, some analysts felt the PAP could have lost more votes if Mr Goh had not embarked on his strictly limited glassnost policy.

More seriously, there were signs that the PAP had lost support among the Chinese working class - its traditional support base. Mr Lee, still senior minister and head of the opposition only fielded candidates in a limited number of constituencies

PAP, felt the government had neglected the concerns of this group. "I think it was a sense of being squeezed out of the mainstream, that they were no longer getting the kind of attention that, as the majority, they should have. I think that caused the switch," said Mr Lee.

Mr Goh acknowledged that the PAP had become too remote and should strive to be less elitist.

Part of the reason for the PAP's poor showing in the August election was also due to clever opposition tactics, particularly by the Singapore Democratic Party which won three out of the four opposition seats.

The opposition only fielded candidates in a limited number of constituencies, thus ensuring the continuance of the PAP in power. Voters were offered the chance of registering their dissatisfaction without threatening the government's survival. "The voters want to keep the PAP in power, but they also want a strong opposition to keep an eye on the government," says Mr Chiam See Tong, leader of the Singapore Democratic Party. "It is a sign

that Singapore's democracy is growing up."

The next challenge facing Mr Goh is a series of by-elections due to take place in the coming months. Among those standing is likely to be Mr J. B. Jeyaretnam, the leader of the Workers Party who has been disqualified from parliament for the past five years.

If Mr Jeyaretnam wins a seat and the PAP once again loses votes, then Mr Goh would be under considerable pressure from the more hard-line section of the party led by Mr Lee Hsien Loong, deputy prime minister and son of Mr Lee Kuan Yew. Another possible contender for power is Mr George Yeo - like Mr Lee junior an army man - at present minister for information and the arts.

But Mr Goh is a political fighter and he can be tough. As Mr Lee's right hand man for many years, he played an active role in monitoring dissent in Singapore.

"If people behave in a manner that will threaten the wider interests of Singapore," said Mr Goh recently, "they will feel the firm smack of the government."

Kieran Cooke

 HOTELS AND PROPERTY

Mixed trends and fortunes

AMID groans over the Singapore government's intention to release 84 hectares from 1992 to 1993 for development, the property scene has one group despairing over a potential glut while another, led by hotels, is finding profitable niches.

A third group, in line with the international re-awakening over preservation and the environment, is involved in conservation properties. It is bringing more colour to its projects and reaping commercial returns.

The gilt theory stems from 1m sq ft of commercial space available during the four years to 1995 against a take-up of 140,000 sq ft annually. In the same period, there will be a supply of 4,710 apartments a year against demand for 3,000.

This theory was strengthened by a lack of bidders, for the first time since 1987, for a hotel-shopping-office development. And unlike the 1987 example, the latest case, in February, was a prime property beside the main Orchard Road shopping thoroughfare, designated to be a 900-room hotel with a six-storey podium at a reserve price of \$843m.

Knight Frank Cheung Hock Chye & Baileau, property consultants, said that rents in Orchard Road shopping complexes had slipped 5-10 per cent last year while the industrial property market would be healthy until end-1992 when some 1.6m sq ft of new factory and warehouse space comes on stream.

Richard Ellis, another consultant, noted that the 11 per cent fall in office rents last year reversed upward spirals of 6.4 per cent and 16.5 per cent in 1989 and 1990, which explained why the outlook for office

space and the general property market was uncertain. But it added that "while prospects may not be as gloomy as what had been projected, short-term problems such as slower economic growth and a perception of over-supply will prevail."

However, the consultancy believes there will be a slight downward pressure on office rents in 1992 as companies will have taken into consideration the anticipated new supply of space. Tenants can expect indirect discounts such as long rent-free periods, cash contributions towards fitting-out costs and 12-15 per cent discounts on the signing of longer leases of six years.

Buyers of residential properties are already getting discounts of between 5 per cent and 20 per cent. This has brought prices down to an average \$440-\$550 per sq ft level. Most observers believe that residential property prices will fall anywhere from 5 per cent to 30 per cent over the next few years. However, the trend may be reversed when discounts and low interest rates draw homebuyers into the market.

This scenario has not dissuaded companies such as the listed First Capital Corporation, with a war chest of \$250m, from developing a sizeable share of the residential property development, said a Kay Hian James Capel residential property review. The broking firm said that more big players would emerge in this arena in the next few years as the government releases more land for sale. They could include Hotel Marco Polo, Hotel Properties (which operates the Hilton and Four Seasons Hotels), and the Kuok

group of Shangri-la fame. Tourists have returned to Singapore despite the effects of the Gulf war, the vanishing Japanese big spenders and a slowing world economy. Arrivals were up 1.7 per cent to 5.4m last year. Mr N. M. Yeo, the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board's planning and operations director, forecasts a 6.8 per cent growth for 1992.

The bulk of Singapore-bound tourists come from the region rather than from the west. Also, a global economic slowdown tends to send visitors to countries closer to home. Another boost is that 1992 is Visit ASEAN Year. Judging by the success of individual members' promotional efforts, a combined push should yield positive results.

Hotels did not benefit from the pick-up in tourist arrivals from mid-1991. The industry's turnover slid 1.8 per cent to \$1.6bn, the occupancy rate slipped to 76.8 per cent against 80 per cent in 1990, and hotel-operated food and beverage outlets saw revenue contracting 3.8 per cent to \$637.8m.

Brokers Hoare Govett, however, point to positive indicators for 1992. Based on January statistics, actual room lettings rose 2 per cent; average room rates were up 5 per cent to \$151.80 from year-ago levels; hotel room revenues were 6.9 per cent higher while food and beverage revenue increased 10.8 per cent. Gross industry revenue grew 9.1 per cent in January.

Another bright spot is in conservation projects. Such projects have become worthwhile despite conditions imposed which include preservation and restoration of facades and restrictions on

Joyce Quock

 SINGAPORE 3 FINANCIAL SERVICES

Performance slumps

THE financial services sector was unable to sustain its reliable performance of the previous years. Its growth in 1991 slumped to 2.9 per cent against 19 per cent in 1990.

The worldwide consolidation in international banking activities and financial risk management business had affected Singapore-based foreign institutions' offshore lending activities and foreign exchange business.

There were mixed signals about business expectations for the second and third quarters, with commercial banks and finance companies pessimistic while stock and bond brokers were more optimistic.

A recovery and rise of the financial futures market has been the silver lining.

Despite their gloom, the so-called Big Four local banks are meeting and beating analysts' forecasts of record profits for 1991 despite slower loan growth and interbank rates dipping below fixed deposit rates. So far, state-linked DBS Bank's earnings have leapt 19.4 per cent to \$278.4m in 1991. Overseas Union Bank's net after-tax profit expanded 14.3 per cent to \$70.7m, while OCBC Bank forged 20.2 per cent to \$168.3m.

UBS attributed its results to better interest margins while DBS disclosed net interest earnings at a record \$264m in the second half-year. Interest spreads have widened since January to 2.75 points, say analysts. Brokers Hoare Govett note that the contraction of Asian Currency Unit assets, a big factor in the slowdown, had little effect on local banks' profits. It added that if the stock market volume continues to pick up, non-banking services such as securities trading should grow. And, with their capital adequacy ratios exceeding 12 per cent, the banks can enlarge their international lending.

Simex, the Singapore International Monetary Exchange, had its best start this year with January's all-time high of \$65,692 contracts traded vaulting 25.9 per cent above the previous record of 767,143 contracts in March 1989. January's daily average volume of 43,895 contracts was also the

highest level since Simex started trading in 1984.

The exchange's total volume

in 1991 resumed an up trend of 6.1m contracts after faltering in 1990 to 5.7m, due to lower price volatility in the first half. The daily average also moved up from 22,791 contracts in 1990 to 24,175.

Interest rate volatility and increasing international participation accounted for the massive leap in volume. Recognising the increased interest, especially from its European customers, the exchange extended trading hours for interest rate and energy contracts from February.

Interest rate contracts were

again the mainstays with 82.6

per cent of the total volume,

American-styled options, coupled with extended

back months,

are added attractions

ahead of the Nikkei 225 Stock Average with 11.9 per cent. To diversify, Simex has launched an options contract based on the Nikkei 225, which was the first contract written on the Japanese stock index. As Mr Pierre Essig, chief executive officer of Finmat Futures Asia saw it: "There should be a strong demand for the new contract. The sheer size of the underlying Nikkei futures clearly suggests the market has a good appetite for an options contract written on the futures. Furthermore, the American-styled options, coupled with extended back months, are added attractions. Simex offers 15 contracts and the most active Eurodollar futures outside of Chicago."

It was another story on the Stock Exchange of Singapore, where turnover fell to \$30.5bn in 1991 from \$36.8bn in 1990. The pick-up in activity after the Gulf war was not sustainable as other external factors in the US, European and Japanese economies had a dampening effect.

Against the \$33.5bn raised through the market in 1990, last year saw only \$1.3bn raised, with \$2279m from the flotation of 10 new companies. Joyce Quock

"Paradise on Earth"



SHANGRI-LA

HOTELS and RESORTS

BALI · BANGKOK · BEIJING · FIJI · HANGZHOU
HONG KONG · KOTA KINABALU · KUALA LUMPUR
PENANG · SHANGHAI · SINGAPORE

Singapore and Indonesia are co-operating to develop an investment region that provides excellent business opportunities for international capital and services.

In August 1990, Singapore and Indonesia initiated formal agreements to jointly develop tourism, industry and water resources in Indonesia's Riau Province, and to promote and protect investments there. The Agreements reflect the commitment of both countries to co-operate in helping investors capitalise on the complementary resources of both locations.

SINGAPORE INDONESIA

An Investment Partnership

SYNTHESIS OF INFRASTRUCTURE, LABOUR AND LAND

Singapore offers a developed business infrastructure, management and technical expertise, and good experience with multinational corporations. The Riau Islands provide abundant land and a competitive labour force. The combined strengths and resources of



unique opportunity for international investors.

Development has begun on two of the Riau's largest islands - Batam, just 20 km south of Singapore, and Bintan, 45 km south-east of Singapore.

A consortium of Singapore and Indonesian private sector companies has developed the integrated Batam Industrial Park (BIP) with ready-built factories for electronics and related manufacturing.

At the same time, the Bintan Beach International Resort (BBIR) is being developed. This Resort promises to be Asia Pacific's playground of the 21st century.

HIGH-RETURN, LOW-RISK

Both projects represent significant high-return, low-risk opportunities for international investors. For manufacturers, the BIP is an offshore production and distribution base that serves as a gateway to international markets. For leisure-related businesses, the BBIR is a new getaway destination capitalising on the region's booming travel market.



Aerial view of the Batam Industrial Park.

The first phase of BIP took just a year and a half to complete. To date, 29 companies, including European, US and



The Bintan Beach International Resort - an unspoilt paradise.

INTEGRATED INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES

The US\$250 million BIP is a 500 hectare integrated industrial estate with single and multi-storey factories, dormitories, medical clinics, markets, shops, banks and recreation facilities. It also has its own water and power supply, and sewage treatment and international telecommunications facilities.

Japanese electronics multinationals have started manufacturing operations. Companies such as Philips, Thomson, Varta, Bowater, Epson, Sumitomo and AT&T are already turning out television channel switchers, cordless telephones, hi-fi speakers, watches and printed circuit boards.

The US\$60 million Batam Executive Village is also undergoing development, with luxury condominiums and bungalows to house expatriate executives and management personnel. It will include a 36-hole golf course.

BINTAN, A RESORT PARADISE

Bintan is the largest island in the Riau Archipelago. The Bintan Beach International Resort, stretching across some 18 km of beautiful white beaches on the northern coast of the island, is a US\$2.2 billion integrated resort development.

SINGLE TOURIST DESTINATION

BBIR will be marketed with Singapore as a single tourist destination. Tourists arriving at Singapore Changi Airport can directly transfer to the new

Changi Ferry Terminal for a 45-minute ferry ride to BBIR.

When fully completed, the 23,000 hectare mega-resort will host more than 20 hotels, 10 condominium complexes,



Kelongs near Bintan. These are fishing villages made of bamboo structures - unique to this part of the world.

10 golf courses, and offer water-skiing, horse-riding, sailing and surfing. The first hotels are scheduled to open in early 1994.

Together with Singapore, Batam Industrial Park and Bintan Beach International Resort offer all the essentials for rewarding investments in the manufacturing and leisure industries.

In short, they offer the best of Singapore and Indonesia.